THURSDAY
January 9, 2025

BENGALURU
CITY EDITION
20 Pages ₹ 6.00

THE HINDU

www.thehindu.com

INDIA'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER SINCE 1878

https://newsth.live/fb
https://newsth.live/x
https://newsth.live/ig

RNI No. KARENG/1970/49945

Vol. 56 • No. 8

Printed at » Chennai » Coimbatore » Bengaluru » Hyderabad » Madurai » Noida » Visakhapatnam » Thiruvananthapuram » Kochi » Vijayawada » Mangaluru » Tiruchirapalli » Kolkata » Hubballi » Mohali » Malappuram » Mumbai » Tirupati » Lucknow » Cuttack » Patna

18वां प्रवासी भारतीय दिवस
18TH PRAVASI BHARATIYA DIVAS
8th-10th January 2025

विकसित भारत की संकल्पना में प्रवासी भारतीयों का योगदान
DIASPORA'S CONTRIBUTION TO A VIKSIT BHARAT

Ministry of External Affairs
Government of India

Celebrating the Vibrant Spirit of Indian Diaspora
Led by Youth, Inspired by Heritage

18th PRAVASI BHARATIYA DIVAS CONVENTION
and
THEMATIC EXHIBITIONS

HIGHLIGHTS

Remote Flagging off of Pravasi Bharatiya Express and
Visit to Promotional Stalls by the Hon'ble Prime Minister

EXHIBITIONS

- **Vishwaroop Ram:** The Universal Legacy of Ramayana
- **Diaspora's Contribution to Technology**
- **Bharat Bharatiya:** Abhilekhiye Virasat par adharit Pradarshani—Launch of Oman Collection

Inauguration by

Shri Narendra Modi
Hon'ble Prime Minister of India

Chief Guest

H.E. Ms. Christine Carla Kangaloo
President of the Republic of Trinidad & Tobago

In the August presence of

Dr. Hari Babu Kambhampati
Governor, Odisha

Shri Mohan Charan Majhi
Chief Minister, Odisha

Dr. S. Jaishankar
Union Minister

Shri Dharmendra Pradhan
Union Minister

Shri Pralhad Joshi
Union Minister

Shri Jual Oram
Union Minister

Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw
Union Minister

Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya
Union Minister

Sushri Shobha Karandlaje
Union Minister of State

Shri Kirtivardhan Singh
Union Minister of State

Shri Pabitra Margherita
Union Minister of State

Shri Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo
Deputy Chief Minister, Odisha

Smt. Pravati Parida
Deputy Chief Minister, Odisha

9th January, 2025 | Janata Maidan, Bhubaneswar
Guests and Delegates requested to be seated by 8.30 AM.

atithi devo bhava

Scan for Programme Details

DADLS-79

OIPR-15001/13/0356/2425

Watch live on DD News and DD Odia | on Youtube: DD News / DD ODIA

Information & Public Relations Department, Government of Odisha

THURSDAY
January 9, 2025

BENGALURU
CITY EDITION
20 Pages ₹ 6.00

THE HINDU

www.thehindu.com

INDIA'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER SINCE 1878

https://newsth.live/fb
https://newsth.live/x
https://newsth.live/ig

RNI No. KARENG/1970/49945

Vol. 56 • No. 8

Printed at » Chennai » Coimbatore » Bengaluru » Hyderabad » Madurai » Noida » Visakhapatnam » Thiruvananthapuram » Kochi » Vijayawada » Mangaluru » Tiruchirapalli » Kolkata » Hubballi » Mohali » Malappuram » Mumbai » Tirupati » Lucknow » Cuttack » Patna

ONGOING OPERATION

One body retrieved from Assam coal mine

NEWS » PAGE 12

ON A RAMPAGE

Thousands flee wildfires in Los Angeles

WORLD » PAGE 16

DIASPORA SUMMIT

Jaishankar kicks off youth event

NEWS » PAGE 14

DATA POINT

Centre's share in States' revenue sees a surge

States struggling to spruce up own income

OPINION » PAGE 11

AUSTRALIAN OPEN

Sinner and Sabalenka get the top billing

SPORT » PAGE 17

NEARBY

ED expands probe to cover roadworks

BENGALURU
The raid by ED at BBMP headquarters continued on Wednesday. While it is probing irregularities in installation of RO plants in 2016, it is also examining documents on roadworks totalling to ₹46,000 crore. » PAGE 2

Three convicts die after consuming 'essence' in Mysuru

MYSURU
Three persons serving their sentence in Mysuru Central Prison died after allegedly consuming essence used in the preparation of cakes. Nagaraju, Madesha, and Ramesh, died at K.R. Hospital, where they were being treated. » PAGE 4

6 killed, 20 hurt in Tirupati stampede

Thousands of people had gathered to collect tickets for temple festival tomorrow; Naidu directs action against TTD employees found guilty

The Hindu Bureau
TIRUMALA

Six persons were killed and more than 20 critically injured in a stampede at Tirupati late on Wednesday evening as people jostled for tickets for the Vaikunta Ekadasi festival at the Tirumala temple on Friday, the Chairman of the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams Trust Board, B.R. Naidu, said.

The TTD had set up around 90 counters at various locations in Tirupati and announced that tickets would be made available from 5 a.m. on Thursday. The announcement drew tens of thousands of people, eager to ensure their place for darshan.

However, the overwhelming crowd at the counters, including Vishnu Nivasam, Bairagipatteda, and Ramachandra Pushkarini, led to chaos as the arrangements were reportedly not adequate. The police had a tough time controlling the crowd.

The injured were rushed to the government-run Sri Venkateswara Ramnarain Ruia Hospital for treatment. Authorities have yet to confirm the identities of the deceased and the injured.

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu expressed shock over the incident and instructed the TTD and police officials to extend the best medical care. He called for strict action against the employees responsible for the incident.

Rush for darshan: People gather near a ticket counter at Vishnu Nivasam in Tirupati on Wednesday. ANI

HSRP: State extends deadline till January 31

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Transport Department of Karnataka has extended the deadline for installing High Security Registration Plates (HSRP) till January 31. This marks the sixth extension. HSRP installation is mandatory for vehicles registered before April 1, 2019.

The HSRP is a secure number plate designed to prevent misuse. It features non-reusable locks, making removal possible only by breaking them. Each plate comes with a unique 10-digit number linked to the vehicle's chassis and engine details, which are stored in a central database.

A Transport Department official said HSRP plates follow a uniform design and font, with a blue 'chakra' symbol on the left. Background colours vary based on vehicle type.

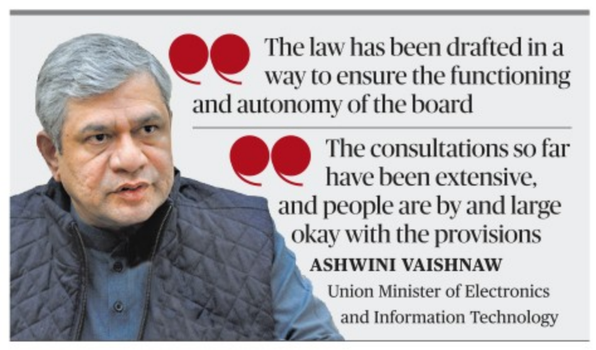
Data Rules to be rolled out by mid-2025, says Vaishnaw

Varghese K. George
Aroon Deep
NEW DELHI

The Union government is aiming at finalising and notifying the Digital Personal Data Protection Rules, currently in a draft state, by the middle of the year, Union Minister of Electronics and Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnaw has said.

"The consultations so far have been extensive, and people are by and large okay with the provisions," Mr. Vaishnaw said in an exclusive interview with *The Hindu* on Wednesday. "I don't see too many amendments coming in the final notification beyond some tweaks."

While large firms are prepared to comply quickly with most of the Rules, Mr. Vaishnaw said that a maximum of two years are being given for implementation. This will allow certain categories of data fiduciaries some more time to prepare for the full implementation of the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023, which the Rules seek to operationalise. The government is currently accepting stakeholder comments on the draft until February 18.



"The law has been drafted in a way to ensure the functioning and autonomy of the Personal Data Protection Board of India," Mr. Vaishnaw said, adding that the implementation of the Act would be digital in nature. The same approach has been followed in at least one other institution: the Grievance Appellate Committee, which deals with social media complaints under the IT Rules, 2021.

Promoting components

On electronics manufacturing, Mr. Vaishnaw said, "We are working on a programme for promoting and incentivising component manufacturing in our country", adding to existing schemes for IT hardware and semiconductors.

FULL INTERVIEW ON
» PAGE 13

Merry morning

Beating on: A person rows his boat on a stream on the outskirts of Srinagar on a cold winter morning on Wednesday. IMRAN NISSAR

'Dinner meet shouldn't have been halted'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Congress central leadership decision to halt a dinner meeting of the party's SC/ST Ministers and legislators from Karnataka does not seem to have gone down well with them.

Cooperation Minister K.N. Rajanna, who is from an ST community, and was set to attend the meeting hosted by Home Minister G. Parameshwara earlier scheduled for Wednesday, expressed his unhappiness with the direction of the high command to cancel it.

FULL REPORT ON
» PAGE 6

Lokayukta raids on eight officials

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Lokayukta officials on Wednesday carried out simultaneous raids on eight government officials in 20 locations across eight districts and unearthed movable and immovable properties that were disproportionate to their known sources of income.

According to Lokayukta sources, the raids were under way in Bengaluru, Mandya, Bidar, Belagavi, Tumakuru, Gadag, Ballari, and Raichur.

The seized valuables, including movable and immovable properties, were worth ₹21,05,15,745, according to a release.

Six Maoists surrender before Chief Minister

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Six Maoists, who were active in Karnataka, surrendered before Chief Minister Siddaramaiah here on Wednesday.

With this, Karnataka had taken a big step towards becoming "Naxal free", Mr. Siddaramaiah announced and said that the government would soon take a call on the dissolution of Anti-Naxal Force (ANF).

Only one known Maoist activist, who quit the movement several months ago, is still at large.

Latha's gesture

On behalf of the Maoists, Mundagaru Latha, leader of the group in the State, symbolically handed over her olive green uniform and received a copy of the Constitution of India from Mr. Siddaramaiah.

Joining the mainstream: The Maoists surrendering before Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar in Bengaluru on Wednesday. PTI

She handed over a petition with a list of their demands that include distribution of land to the landless, rejection of the Kasturirangan Committee Report, and removal of the national park tag for the Kudremukh National Park.

Of the six who surrendered four – Mundagaru Latha, Mareppa Aroli alias Jayanna, Sundari Kuttaluru, and Vanajakshi are from Karnataka, and K. Vasanthan and Jisha are from Tamil Nadu and Kerala respectively.

Ms. Latha said that they were joining the mainstream abjuring the path of violence in order to continue their pro-people struggle in a democratic and constitutional way. "We will assure the people that we will fight for them till our last breath," she said.

Mr. Siddaramaiah welcomed the six Maoists into the mainstream and said the government would facilitate their rehabilitation as per the government policy and whatever that could be done within the legal framework. He said the Deputy Commissioner of Chikkamagaluru had already issued an order approving their rehabilitation package.

Mareppa Aroli pledged half of his rehabilitation package to the Government Primary School in his village Aroli in Raichur district.

Mr. Siddaramaiah said that the six Maoists had realised that the system could not be changed through violence. "Babasaheb Ambedkar had said after Independence and adopting of our Constitution, we have to abjure the mode of revolution, civil disobedience, non-cooperation and satyagraha. When constitutional avenues are open, there is no space for unconstitutional means," he said.

The Chief Minister also announced that the government would set up special fast-track courts to try cases against the six at the earliest.

To be produced in court today

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The six surrendered Maoists will be formally arrested and produced before the court in Chikkamagaluru on Thursday. The State police will seek their custody and the legal process will follow.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 3

RELATED REPORTS ON
» PAGE 6

The Indians will definitely benefit from playing with overseas stars

I am eagerly looking forward to the next men's junior World Cup, the junior Indian team is going to be one of the title favourites: Dragons coach Eijk

HIL

INTERVIEW

REIN VAN EIJK

K. Keerthivasan

Tamil Nadu Dragons head coach Rein van Eijk is really happy with the way the Hockey India League (HIL) is shaping up in Rourkela.

Though the Dragons are still finding their feet in the league, they jumped to the second spot with a 6-5 win over Team Gonasika in a thriller on Wednesday. However, the 37-year-old, who guided Germany to the 2023 Junior Men's World Cup title, has backed the HIL and his team to succeed.

In an interview with *The Hindu*, the Dutchman spoke at length about the HIL, his coaching philosophy, the future of India hockey, and more. *Excerpts:*

What has impressed you the most about the HIL so far?

It's the magnitude of the spectacle, the way we're trying to sell the sport and Hockey India is doing a great job in media coverage and in setting the stage for an absolutely unique event. The other thing that is remarkable is the number of absolute world-class players in one league and the way that everyone is interacting with each other and how that's influencing the level of play. You can see huge jumps being made from game to game by all players and the way people treat each other is something very special. You can truly see that it is one big hockey family.

Your thoughts on the HIL?

So far, it's been quite okay. We haven't gotten to a point in the league where all teams play at a consistent level. You see all teams are having some sort of difficulty in controlling the game, which might be due to the fact that there are so many different nationalities and levels of players in one team. Nonetheless, you see the level of play improving game by game. The matches have been entertaining and I think that's one of the most important things. I'm happy about that.

You have been an experienced coach, but this is your first trip to India as a coach. How has it been so far?

Yes, it's my first time coaching in India. The challenge of working with people from so many different cultures. But I think we have a very special mix of Indian players as well since we have a big part of the team from Tamil Nadu. It's going to be a very exciting experience bringing it all together.

I've been in India several times for hockey, for coaching courses. However, the city of Chennai and then leading such an international team is going to be a first for me. I think that my experiences so far have prepared me very well for this challenge.

How did you get involved with Tamil Nadu Dragons?

I was first approached by Vikrampal Singh, the competition manager of the Hockey India League.

There was a franchise that had decided that they really wanted to have a coach from the German system because of the conviction of several people around the franchise. At the time I didn't know it was a Chennai franchise. Then I got in touch with Sekar (Manoharan), president of the Hockey Unit of Tamil Nadu and treasurer of Hockey India, Charles Dixon, assistant coach of TN Dragons.

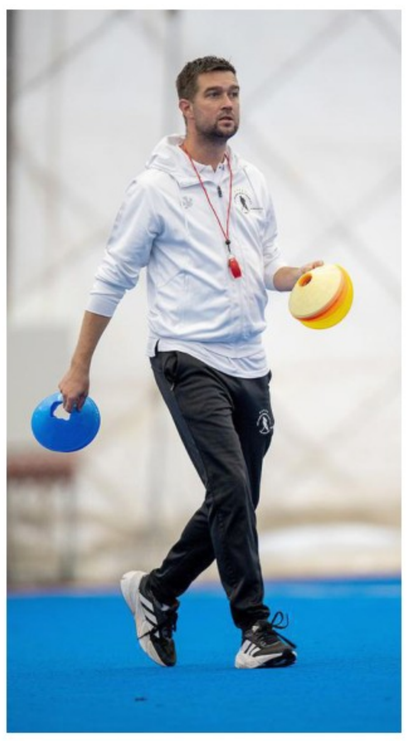
Those conversations were very positive for me. Both the franchise and Sekar were saying all the right things and you can see that they have a very long-term plan in mind. That is something that really reeled me in. The project was very easy to say yes to them after those conversations.

HIL has quite a bit of history. It started in 2005 and went on till 2008. It was restarted in 2013 before folding up in 2017. Now, it has returned after a seven-year break. What do you think of HIL?

I think that Hockey India has driven Indian hockey and world hockey in the previous editions. I think, especially the 2013 to 2017 block, has really ignited hockey not just in India but all over the world. I think now the league is trying to be bigger and bolder while taking a little less risky approach from a financial standpoint.

You have coached several Dutch clubs and also the Germany junior men's World Cup team to victory in 2023. What has been your coaching philosophy?

I think it's my job to maximise the qualities of each and every player and I think that's where my qualities definitely lie because my leadership style is very much supporting. It's not authoritarian. I think what strengthens me is that I very much let players get involved in having good interactions, creating a good culture, and getting a message across. It's a leadership style that I've had to adopt from a very early age on-



ward because I started coaching the teams I was playing in at a very young age.

Being younger than most of the players at that time made me comfortable with giving responsibility to the players and I think that's going to be very important in a situation with so many different cultures together. If you look at the overseas players, also the Indian players, we have team-first players and I think that fits the kind of character and the kind of coach that I am and it will fit the challenge.

How do the Dragons see the growth of its two goalkeepers Senthamizh Arasu and Prince Deep Singh?

Looking back at previous editions of the Hockey India League, there has never been a team in the current setup reaching the finals with an Indian goalie. Therefore, we were adamant on getting Irish goalkeeper David Harte.

We also knew that it was very important for us to get Tamil Nadu's Senthamizh Arasu.

The local guy is someone who has connections to the region. With the other Indian goalkeeper Prince Deep Singh, we obviously have a very talented young goalie, the number one goalie of the junior India team.

They could be easy and good successors for when David quits. We don't just have a very good setup in place for success but also for learning. David (36 years of age) is experienced in playing in the Hockey India League (he played in 2014, '15, '16 and '17). He also knows that we are going to pull him as one of our strategic means to win games. It also means that Prince Deep and Arasu will get playing opportunities. This is probably better than most of the other franchises.

How much will the HIL help Indian players?

Hockey is very much embedded in the Indian culture. Hockey being a very technical sport, skills are way more important than they are in football. The overseas players tend to be from a body size standpoint. That is a disadvantage for the Indian players in other sports.

But for a sport like hockey being so technical, I think the Indian players have a huge advantage. I think the skill level of the Indian players is immensely high. However, what you can see in the international game of hockey is that structure and physicality have become way more important. That also means that the way I go about practice, the way I go about tactics, and the way I go about decision-making on and off the pitch is something that is not always embedded widely in the Indian system.

It is more embedded in the overseas system. I feel that there is an area where our Indian players will definitely benefit from playing with the overseas players. They will need to find solutions playing with and against such large bodies. They will also see and experience a different level of structured hockey and structured approach in defence and a disciplined approach in how we want to go about things.

On the other hand, I think it is going to be a great learning experience for overseas players because I think the free-flowing game of Indian hockey is tremendous to watch, but it is also very hard to play with and play against because it is simply so fast and so open. I think it is going to be beneficial for both Indian players and overseas players.

According to you, which Indian youngster will shine in the league this time?

We [Dragons] have several very good youngsters. I am looking forward to working with Y. Anand, Chandan [Yadav]. I think Prince Deep might have a big role in our team and that's going to be interesting.

I very much hope that this league will be a stepping stone for many juniors and the local boy Selvam Karthi and Mohammad Raheel. I hope they solidify their spots in the national team as well. I think it will be beneficial for many players.

There is a strong possibility that the next men's junior World Cup might be held in Tamil Nadu. Are you looking forward to that?

Yes. I'm very much looking forward to that. I think that makes the adventure even more special. Being able to coach a team from the Tamil Nadu region that might host the next (2025) Junior World Cup is obviously very exciting. And I think the stadium is amazing. And it's going to be great to also play hockey in this part of India with such a big group of future stars in hockey. The junior Indian team is going to be one of the title favourites.

The crowning glory in your career has been coaching Germany to the FIH junior men's World Cup in 2023 when the team beat India in the semifinals on way to the title...

The Indian team was technically sound. And they had interesting solutions for different problems that faced them. I think we were fortunate that the Indian players were probably mentally not as stable as we were, and that we had a big physical advantage. We were able to change a couple of things and the Indian players had difficulties reacting to that.

The strengths of that team were that they played as a unit, their skill levels were good, and were good in scoring and passing. And I think the Indians thought of them as the weaker team, even though they were way better. They were not too convinced. They need to be little bit more mentally self-aware. Obviously, it (winning the 2023 junior World Cup) was an amazing feeling to finish such a journey that we've all put so much energy and time. And it's something that I'm still very proud of. It also creates a hunger for more.

Germany has won the junior men's World Cup a record seven times. What is the secret of Germany's success?

I think what the German system does very well is that we look differently at building athletically robust players. We start a little bit early in developing a winning culture. The fact that Germany doesn't have a centralised system is, in a lot of ways, also a big advantage because it makes players more flexible. And, also makes them a little bit fresh when we get to tournaments. Excitement might be a little bit higher.

Who is your pick from the HIL?

Soorma HC will definitely be the favourites. They obviously have a good core of Indian players. They have many drag- flickers as well. The fact that they had the Indian national players in their ranks made it a lot easier for them to hit the ground running.

KARNATAKA POWER CORPORATION LIMITED

CIN : U85110KA1970SGC001919

TENDER NOTIFICATION

Tenders are invited through **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** for the following works:

Sl. No	Tender No. & Date, Name of the work, Amount put to tender, EMD, Last date for submission and Contact Person
	RAICHUR THERMAL POWER STATION
1	**(1)** KPCL/2024-25/PS/WORK_INDENT2461, Dtd: 02.01.2025. Supply, Erection & Commissioning of 5 Ton Monorail Block Hoist, Fabrication of supporting structure and providing required foundation at Cement godown at RTPS. EMD: **Rs. 88,052/-.** Last date for submission: **18.01.2025, 17.30 Hrs.** Contact: **Executive Engineer(CHP)E1,** RTPS, KPCL, Shaktinagar,-584170. **(2)** KPCL/2024-25/PS/WORK_INDENT2469, Dtd: 03.01.2025. Providing and erection of Clinker grinder roller assembly and thrust bearing assembly of Ash water pump of RTPS. Last date for submission: **13.01.2025, 16.00 Hrs.** Contact: **Executive Engineer(AHP-2),** RTPS, KPCL, Shaktinagar,-584170, M.No.: 9449596551. **(3)** KPCL/2024-25/OW/WORK_INDENT2398/CALL-2, Dtd: 01.01.2025. Providing, Supplying and Insertion of Special size 60 Kgs BG PSC Sleepers Fan Shaped Layout for 1 in 8½, 52 Kgs Point & Crossings assembly (2 Sets) in Marshalling yard area at RTPS. Amount put to tender: **Rs. 16.72 Lakhs.** Work completion period: **Three (03) Months.** Contact: **Executive Engineer(RTM),** RTPS, KPCL, Shaktinagar,-584170, M.No.: 9480682533.
	BELLARY THERMAL POWER STATION
2	**(1)** KPCL/2024-25/PS/WORK_INDENT2053/Call-3, Date: 30.12.2024. Supply, Installation and Calibration of Portable Hydrogen & Oxygen Analyzer". Last date for submission: **17.01.2025 at 11.30 hrs.** Contact: **Dy. General Manager (Chemical),** BTPS, KPCL, Kudathini-583182, Bellary. M.No.: 9448290767 & 9480830403.

ANDHRA PRADESH CENTRAL POWER DISTRIBUTION CORPORATION LTD.,

Vidyut Nilayam, Corporate Office, ITI College Road, Vijayawada-520008.

Tender Notice No: CGM/PROJ/VJA/T&D WORKS/SIP-01/2024-25

Bids through **apeprocurement.gov.in** are invited from eligible bidders for "ERECTION OF FOUR NEW 33/11KV OUTDOOR SUB-STATIONS AND ONE NEW 33/11KV SEMI-INDOOR SUB-STATION CONNECTED 33KV AND 11KV LINES AT DAMARAVARIPALEM, YANAMADALA, T NAIDUPALEM, KASINAPALLI AND NSP COLONY IN ADDANKI, ONGOLE AND MARKAPUR DIVISONS OF BAPATLA AND PRAKASAM DISTRICTS IN APCPDCL ON TURNKEY BASIS" under System Improvement Project (SIP). The Tender information will be made available in AP E-procurement Portal from **09.01.2025, 18:00 Hrs,** Last date for Bid submission online is **28.01.2025, 16:00 Hrs.**

Sd/- Chief General Manager/Projects, APCPDCL :: Vijayawada

DIPR 3445PP/CL, Dt: 08/01/2025 **Email: cgmproj.cpdcl@apcpdcl.in**

ANDHRA PRADESH TOURISM AUTHORITY (APTA)

GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH

5th Floor, Stalin Corporate Building, Auto Nagar, Vijayawada.

Expression of Interest (EoI) for Empanelment of Event Management Agencies for AP Tourism

Andhra Pradesh Tourism Authority (APTA) wishes to engage the services of eligible competent event management agencies for organizing and managing events, roadshows, fairs, etc. from conception to completion stage. In this regard, APTA is inviting Expression of Interests (EoIs) for empanelment of reputed agencies/organizations to perform various activities organsied by AP Tourism.

Expression of interest and other details can be downloaded from website **www.aptourism.gov.in.** from **09-01-2025** onwards.

The last date for submission of response to the Expression of Interest is mentioned in the EOI Document.

DIPR 3447PP/CL, Dt: 08/01/2025 **CEO, APTA**

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that, our client is proposing to purchase the Schedule Property from its owner, Mr Paras Dave Suri.

Any person having any subsisting claim, right, title or interest, in respect of the Schedule Property or any part thereof, in any manner including by way of easement, beneficial interest or pre-emption or under any agreement or other disposition or under any suit or award passed by any Court or Authority, arbitrator, *lis-pendens*, power of attorney, bequest, FSI, development rights, partnership, family arrangement or settlement or otherwise encumbrance howsoever ("**Claim**"), are hereby requested to respond with documentary proof to the undersigned within 10(ten) days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which, it shall be presumed that no such Claim exists and if it existed, the claimant has relinquished such Claim and/or waived their right to exercise such Claim.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

Residential Plot admeasuring 35,566 Sq Ft bearing BBMP Khatha No. 222/229, PID No. 2395101513, situated in Ward No. 86 Marthahalli, Yamaluru, formed in Sy Nos 44/8A and 39/2 of Yamaluru Village, Varthur Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, presently Bangalore East Taluk, alongwith a house building thereon having a built-up area of 9,377.991 Sq Ft and bounded on the:

East by : Property of Mr Raju M Mahtaney in Sy Nos 39/2 and 44/8A;

West by : Remaining land in Sy Nos 39/2 and 44/8A;

North by : Road; and

South by : Sy No 44/8A.

Dated this 09th day of January 2025.

Pavithra Thammaiah
Counsel
Khaitan & Co LLP
Embassy Quest, 3rd Floor, 45/1
Magrath Road, Bengaluru - 560 025
T: +91 80 4339 7000

FORM No. 18

Notice for appearance in Appeals Order 41 Rule 14 CPC, and Rules 1, 2, 4 and 11 of Chapter IV Karnataka High Court Rules

IN THE HIGH COURT OF KARNATAKA AT BENGALURU

MFA No.5234/2021 (ECA)

Appellant/s
The Commissioner
Dept of Central Govt., Income Tax
Qeens Road Bangalore - 560001
By Sri Y.V. Raviraj Advocate.
Vs
Respondent/s
Aswathanarayana Rao S/o Late Venkatanarasaiah, Aged About 78 years R/at No.35, A3 Block, SMIG, 4th Stage, Yelahanka and others

Appeal from the judgement/Award/Order passed on 03.03.2021 PASSED in ECA No.111/2016 on the file of the XVI Additional Judge, Court of Small Causes, Member, MACT, Bengaluru, (SCCH-14).

To: Respondent No.5
Raghavendar Electricals
R/at 687 Lakshmi Towers, 7th Block, II Phase, Banashankari, III State, Bengaluru - 560085

Whereas the aforementioned Appeal preferred has been registered by this court.

NOTICE is hereby given to you to appear in this court in person or through an advocate duly instructed or through some one authorised by law to act for you in this case on **11/02/2025 at 10.30 AM**, in case you intended to contest the appeal. If you fail so to appear, the appeal will be dealt with, heard and decided in your absence.

Given under my hand and the seal of this court on **17th Day of December 2024.**

By the Order of the Court
Sd/- Assistant registrar
High Court of Karnataka,
Bengaluru

Place: Bengaluru
Date: 08.01.2025

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL, MEDICAL EDUCATION & TRAINING, UTTAR PRADESH

6th FLOOR, JAWAHAR BHAWAN, LUCKNOW

No. ME-3/2025/58 **Lucknow: Dated-08 January, 2025**

Important information regarding opening of registration portal for online counseling of UP NEET PG-2024

In view of the reduction of cut-off percentile for NEET PG-2024 by MCC New Delhi Notice No.12021/05/2024, dated 04.01.2025, the dates for online registration for admission to MD/MS/Diploma and DNB courses in government/private medical colleges for UP NEET PG-2024 counseling are fixed as follows-

S.No.	Description	Dates	Total Days
1	Date of online Registration & deposition of registration fee/ Security money	09th January 2025 (From 5:00 PM)) to 13th January 2025 (Till 11:00 AM)	04 Days

- Only the candidates declared successful in the NEET PG-2024 entrance examination are eligible to participate in the counseling of UP NEET PG-2024.
- The registration portal is being opened due to the cut-off percentile being lowered by MCC New Delhi for online registration for all the upcoming round for eligible candidates under UP NEET PG Counseling-2024.
- There is no need for re-registration of candidates already registered for UP NEET PG-2024 counseling.
- Only new candidates registered on the prescribed dates and previously registered candidates will be eligible to participate in the counseling. The list of all the above registered candidates will be sent to NBMES New Delhi for preparation of State Specific Merit List, in which the state merit rank list of previously registered candidates may change.
- For the UP NEET PG 2024 counseling, it is mandatory for the eligible new candidates to register by logging on the website **https://www.upneet.in** and depositing the registration fee of Rs. 3000/- (Rs. three thousand only) online.
- The registration fee will not be refunded under any circumstances.i.e registration fee is not refundable.
- To participate in the counseling, it is mandatory to deposit security amount of Rs. 30,000/- (Rs. thirty thousand only) for the seats of MD/MS/Diploma and DNB courses in the government colleges and Rs. 2,00,000/- (Rs. two lakh only) for the seats of MD/MS courses in the private colleges online. On depositing the security amount of Rs. 2,00,000/-, the candidates will be eligible for government and private seats.
- Candidates whose registration fee & Security money is not deposited will not be eligible for choice filling in the counselling process.
- All information related to UP NEET PG 2024 counseling will be uploaded on **website https://upneet.gov.in** and **www.dgme.up.gov.in.**

(Director General)

CLASSIFIEDS MART

TO ADVERTISE VISIT
www.thehinduads.com
Bengaluru: 98455 29981 ■ 080-22071826
Mangaluru: 0824-2417575 ■ 2417580
Hubballi: 0836-2338600 ■ 2335700

PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, SHREEJA Nair Spouse of No: 15685496Y Rank: Hav Name: Anil Kumar R serving at CIF (Delta) Sig Regt, C/o 56 APO, presently residing at Gopalayam, Karuvatta PO, Alappuzha, Kerala-690517, do hereby solemnly affirm and state do hereby declare that I have changed my name as Shreeja V Nair (Correct Name) instead of Shreeja Nair and due to mismatch in my husband's service records with civil documents, vide affidavit dt: 14.11.2024 sworn before Notary Kr.P.B.Katoch, Batote UT (J&K)

CHANGE OF NAME

I, VINAY MADHAVA, Aged about 42 years, S/o Nandana Hosahalli Madhava, presently residing at No. 1000, 26th Cross, 17th Main, 3rd Sector, HSR Layout, Bangalore South, Bangalore, Karnataka 560102, have changed my name from **"MADHAV VINAY"** to **"VINAY MADHAVA"** and from today onwards I will be known as **"VINAY MADHAVA".,** vide affidavit dated 26/12/2024 sworn to before K.V.Mani Advocate and Notary Bangalore.

PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, NILESH Narasimha Pai, S/O: Miyar Narasimha Pai, R/O: B 3–32 SFS 117, Sector B, 4th B Cross, Yelahanka New Town, Bangalore – 560064, Have Changed my Name to Nilesh Pai. Affidavit on 07/01/25.

I, Mary J Cletus, D/o Devaraj G.S, R/a No.3/32, Radha Nivas,11th Cross, Vyalikaval, B'lore-560003 have changed my name to Mary Matilda.D vide affidavit dt: 08.01.2025 before Notary K.Peethambaran, B'lore.

TENDERS

Chennai Port Authority
Civil Engineering Department

Notice for e-Tender

Tender No.T/JDA/66/2024/E

Online bids are invited under two bid system for **"Strengthening and Upgradation of JD Entrance Walls at Chennai Port on EPC contract Basis"**

Estimated Cost Put to tender: Rs.10426.00 Lakhs (Apprx.) excl. GST

For details visit our website: www.chennaiport.gov.in & http://eprocure.gov.in

Chief Engineer

LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE HIGH COURT OF KARNATAKA BENGALURU

MFA No. 3920 OF 2024 (ISA)

In the matter of the last will of Smt. Narayanamma
BETWEEN : **SRI NAVEEN KUMAR T M** S/o Mariyappa, Aged about 31 years, Residing at Near Milk Dairy, Teneyuru Village, Sulibele Hobli, Hosakote Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District - 562129.
...APPELLANT
AND : **1. NIL ...RESPONDENTS**

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas, the Appellant above named have preferred this appeal U/S 299 OF INDIAN SUCCESSION ACT, 1925, against the order dated 27/03/2024 passed in P & SC No. 48/2023 passed by the Court of the Principal District and Sessions Judge Chikkaballapura dismissing the petition filed under section 276 of Indian Succession Act 1925 for granting of a will dated 24/12/2018 executed by deceased Smt. Narayanamma, died on 18/04/2019 i.e, Appellant's Grand mother.

Aggrieved parties are hereby directed to appear before Honble court either in person or through an Advocate Pleader, to answer the claim of the petitioner **on 23/01/2025 at 10.30 a.m.,** failing which the appeal will be heard and decided in favour of the claimants on merits.

Given under my hand and the seal of this Court, this the Tuesday the 17TH December 2024.

By order of the Court
ASSISTANT REGISTRAR
HIGH COURT OF KARNATAKA
BENGALURU

LEGAL NOTICE

Before the Honourable III Additional District Judge
Tirunelveli
M.C.O.P.NO. 232 of 2021

Mookammal and 3 anothers
-Petitioners
/Vs/
Sampath Kumar,
S/o.Venkatesh,
Near Sacred Heart School,
Upparahall, Tumbur,
Karnataka-572 102.
...1st Respondent

NOTICE

These Petitioners has filed the said claim petition for death of one Eswaran died in motor accident took happened on 04-09-2020. The said case is posted on 01-02-2025 for the 1st respondent appearance at 10.30 A.M. before said Hon'ble court and for the 1st respondent objection if any, failing which the above said claim will be decided for this 1st respondent absence.

R.Seethalakshmi, B.A., B.L.,
Advocate, Palayamkottai,
Tirunelveli-627002
Mob: 90258 70701

BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE

Office of the Engineer-in-Chief,
Head Office Premises, N.R. Square, Bengaluru-560002

No.: EIC/BBMP/PR/1923/2024-25 **Date: 08.01.2025**

CORRIGENDUM-3

"Funding requirements of the Underground Vehicular Road 3-lane Twin Tunnels with Tunnel Boring Machine for the North-South Corridor of Bengaluru starting from Hebbal Esteem Mall Junction to Silk Board KSRP Junction in the State of Karnataka on BOT (Toll) Mode". - **Reg Changes in schedule and amendments in the EOI document with reference to EIC/BBMP/PR/1923/2024-25 dated: 06.12.2024.**

Following is the updated calendar of events for the process: to be read as

Sl. No.	Calender of Events	Published in News Paper	Revised date and time
1	**Last date for submission of bid sealed cover to the Special Commissioner (Finance), BBMP**	**08.01.2025 up to 04:00 p.m.**	**15.01.2025 up to 04:00 p.m.**
2	**Opening of bids**	**08.01.2025 at 05:00 p.m.**	**15.01.2025 at 05:00 p.m.**

Other Terms and Conditions remain unchanged.

You may kindly contact the following officials for any further information / clarification: **Dhananjaya K.K. (+91-98452-08023) or Shilpa (+91-99865-53232).**

Sd/-
Engineer-in-Chief
Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike

KARNATAKA INDUSTRIAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT BOARD

(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)

 # 49, East Wing, 4th & 5th Floor, Khanija Bhavan Race Course Road
Bengaluru – 560 001. Phone No. 080-22265383 website : www.kiadb.in

IADB/ENGG/ETND-EP-39/2573/2024-25 **Date: 08.01.2025**

SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING TENDER

(Through GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Only)

Item Rate Tender under two cover bid system is invited as per the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 1999 and Rules 2000 through electronic procurement from eligible Contractors who have got adequate financial resources, state of the art technology, suitable construction equipments, technical man power & sufficient past experience for the following work as per the schedule given below:

Name of the Work : Arranging Power Supply to water supply project from Yelahanka BWSSB pumping station in Pinakini Bhavana premises to Devanahalli General Industrial Area, Devanahalli Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District.

The last date and time of receipt of tender is : **27.01.2025** upto **4.00 pm.**

Applicants May Download Bidding Documents from the Karnataka Public Procurement Portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.**

Sd/-
Chief Engineer-1, KIADB Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/4214/Zen/2024-25

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD

INVITATION FOR TENDER

(Only through KPP-Portal)

BWSSB invites Tenders from registered Agencies for the following works:

Office of the Chief Engineer (South), 7th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, KG Road, Bengaluru - 560009

Sl. No.	Division	IFT Number		Amount put to tender EMD (in Rs.)	Last Date & Time for Submission of Tender	Date & Time for Opening of Tender
1	South West-1	BWSSB/EESW-1/TO/PB/3994/ 2024-25 Date: 07.01.2025 (7th Call)	1	Rs.70,57,523/- Rs.1,41,150/-	18.01.2025 upto 4:00 PM	20.01.2025 after 3:00 PM
2			2	Rs.27,66,985/- Rs.55,350/-		
3		BWSSB/EESW-1/TO/PB/3994/ 2024-25 Date: 07.01.2025 (5th Call)	3	Rs.41,50,698/- Rs.83,050/-		

Sd/- **Executive Engineer (South West-1)**

Office of the Chief Engineer (West), 6th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, KG Road, Bengaluru - 560009

4	West-1	BWSSB/EEW-1/PB/4382/ 2024-25 Date: 08.01.2025		Rs.59,90,681/- Rs.1,19,900/-	20.01.2025 upto 4:00 PM	21.01.2025 after 4:30 PM

Sd/- **Executive Engineer (West-1)**

5	North West-1	BWSSB/EE(NW-1)/PB/4406/ 2024-25 Date: 08.01.2025 (4th Call)	1	Rs.93,20,431/- Rs.1,87,000/-	17.01.2025 upto 5:00 PM	18.01.2025 after 5:15 PM
6		BWSSB/EE(NW-1)/PB/4406/ 2024-25 Date: 08.01.2025 (3rd Call)	2	Rs.54,33,410/- Rs.1,09,000/-		

Sd/- **Executive Engineer (North West-1)**

7	North West-2	BWSSB/EENW-2/TO/PB/4335/ 2024-25 Date: 08.01.2025 (3rd Call)		Rs.66,99,931/- Rs.1,34,000/-	18.01.2025 upto 4:00 PM	20.01.2025 after 4:30 PM

Sd/- **Executive Engineer (North West-2)**

Office of the Chief Engineer (Design & QA), 9th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, KG Road, Bengaluru - 560009

8	Borewell	BWSSB/EBWTE/AE/6118/ 2024-25, Date: 04.01.2025		Rs.73.65 Lakhs Rs.1.47 Lakhs	16.01.2025 upto 4:00 PM	18.01.2025 at 4:00 PM

Sd/- **Executive Engineer (Borewell)**

Office of the Chief Engineer (East), 6th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, KG Road, Bengaluru - 560009

9	East-1	BWSSB/EE(East)-1/PB/3589/ 2024-25 Date: 07.01.2025 (2nd Call) (Reserved for ST Category)	1	Rs.40,61,738/- Rs.40,700/-	15.01.2025 upto 4:00 PM	17.01.2025 after 5:00 PM
10			2	Rs.25,38,466/- Rs.25,400/-		
11		BWSSB/EE(East)-1/PB/3591/ 2024-25 Date: 07.01.2025 (2nd Call)	1	Rs.33,18,958/- Rs.66,400/-		
12			2	Rs.40,87,811/- Rs.81,800/-		
13			3	Rs.43,84,731/- Rs.87,700/-		

Sd/- **Executive Engineer (East-1)**

Office of the Chief Engineer (Kaveri-O&M), 6th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, KG Road, Bengaluru - 560009

14	Kaveri (O&M)-2	BWSSB/EE(K-O&M)-2/PB/2721/ 2024-25 Date: 08.01.2025	Rs.24.12 Lakhs Rs.50,000/-	16.01.2025 upto 4:00 PM	17.01.2025 after 5:00 PM

Sd/- **Executive Engineer (Kaveri-O&M)-2**

The details regarding the tender and participation in the e-procurment process can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** For further details contact the above signed office during working hours.

DIPR/CP/BCPL/4211/2024-25

ED expands its probe to cover roadworks worth ₹46,000 cr.

Former BJP councillor N.R. Ramesh had filed a complaint with the Directorate of Enforcement over alleged irregularities in asphalting of arterial and sub-arterial roads between 2013-2014 and 2023-24

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The raid by the Directorate of Enforcement (ED) at the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike's (BBMP) headquarters, continued for the second day on Wednesday. While the ED is probing alleged irregularities in the drilling of borewells and installation of reverse osmosis (RO) plants in 2016, it is also examining documents about roadworks totalling to ₹46,000 crore.

Directorate of Enforcement officials were stationed at the office of B.S. Prahallad, Engineer-in-chief, BBMP, on Wednesday. K. MURALI KUMAR

Asphalting works

In December 2024, former BJP councillor N.R. Ramesh filed a complaint with the ED in connection with alleged irregularities in the asphalting of arterial and sub-arterial roads between 2013-2014 and 2023-24. The BBMP had released ₹46,300 crore for the works during this period. The complainant had submitted a 4,113-page document to the ED, accusing 18 IAS-rank officials, including BBMP Chief Commissioner Tushar Giri Nath, of involvement.

No FIR was registered in the case by any other agency. However, the ED was examining documents pertaining to this complaint as well on Wednesday, multiple sources in the BBMP said. A senior official said that the Road Infrastructure Department and other allied departments were cooperating with the agency and providing documents.

In 2016, ₹970 crore was released for the same. The BBMP claimed that it had completed the work. But in the complaint, it was alleged that merely 20% of the work was completed and for the rest fake bills to the tune of over ₹400 crore were raised.

The ED had earlier raided the BBMP headquarters in 2023, in connection with the alleged borewell and RO plants' scam. Following this, the BBMP started to dig borewells in the geographical coordinates mentioned in the bills. However, on the directions of the ED, the works were stopped and materials were seized. This reportedly occurred in the R.R Nagar zone.

According to a source in the BBMP, ED officials were stationed in the office of B.S. Prahallad, Engineer-in-chief, BBMP, on Wednesday.

The ED is collecting and verifying the documents pertaining to works related to the digging of borewells and installations of RO plants at Dasarahalli, Mahadevapura, R.R. Nagar, Yelahanka, and Bommanahalli.

'Infighting in BJP cause for raid'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Deputy Chief Minister and Bengaluru Development Minister D.K. Shivakumar told reporters that the raid by the ED was owing to infighting in the BJP.

"It's due to an internal fight in the BJP. A BJP leader had given a complaint against his own party MLAs because he was denied the ticket to contest the Assembly elections," he said, adding that he had asked civic officials to prepare for a raid as he had anticipated the same.

High Court directs BDA to complete remaining 1.8 km road of PRR (Part II) project

FROM THE COURT

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

While refusing to quash the acquisition of around 31 acres of land, which was acquired among other land parcels for the formation of the Peripheral Ring Road (PRR) (Part II) project but no award was passed for the land, the High Court of Karnataka has directed the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) to pay compensation for the land within six months and complete the remaining 1.8 km of the total length of 10.3 km road under the project.

Justice E.S. Indiresh passed the order while disposing of the petitions filed by Vanitha M. and others from Sulikere, Kannahalli, Machohalli, and Kenchanapura villages.

The BDA had notified their land, among the others, by issuing preliminary notifications in 2005-06 and final notifications in 2011 for the PRR Part II project between Hosur Road-Mysuru Road and Tumakuru Road (Part II) stretch.

Court refuses to quash acquisition of 31 acres of land for the project

The petitioners had contended that the acquisition of their land had lapsed due to the non-passing of award by the BDA for all these years and due to change in the alignment of the road.

The BDA had contended that the 8.5-km stretch of the PRR Part II had already been completed and the remaining portion could not be completed due to various reasons, including pending litigations. The BDA had also claimed that the acquisition of land for the road formation will not lapse unlike lapsing of acquisition of land for forming layouts.

Citing the apex court's judgments in which the BDA was directed to proceed with the formation of the PRR and the PRR Part II, the High Court said it could not quash the acquisition of land belonging to the petitioners. However, the court directed the BDA to pass awards, pay compensation, and take possession of these land parcels.

₹5 lakh penalty imposed on consultancy firm

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has imposed a penalty of ₹5 lakh on Rodic Consultants Private Limited, which prepared the draft of the detailed project report for the proposed tunnel road project.

The development comes after citizens highlighted an error in the executive summary of the DPR in which the names of places in Maharashtra were mentioned instead of Karnataka. In a chart pertaining to traffic volume counts and cordon locations (table 15, page 29), the consultant company has written the names of Malegaon and Nashik in eight columns to specify traffic volume between these two directions.

There were errors in the executive summary of the DPR the firm had prepared for the proposed tunnel road project

This mistake led activists and experts to question the authenticity of the work calling it a copy-and-paste job. B.S. Prahlad, Engineer-in-Chief, BBMP, said after the error was brought to the notice of the civic body, it had considered this very seriously. The company has now tendered an apology and the BBMP has imposed a penalty of ₹ 5 lakh.

Gadkari's assurance to Kumaraswamy on Satellite Town Ring Road project

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Steel H.D. Kumaraswamy said on Wednesday he had been assured of the Satellite Town Ring Road (STRR) project being placed before the Public Private Partnership Appraisal Committee (PPPAC) for evaluation at the earliest.

The STRR, which is expected to reduce traffic congestion, came up for discussion during a meeting of Mr. Kumaraswamy with Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari in Delhi on Wednesday. While Mr. Kumaraswamy appealed for the revival of this stalled project, Mr. Gadkari assured him that the project proposal would soon be presented to the PPPAC for evaluation and would be implemented at the earliest, a note from Mr. Kumaraswamy's office said.

The STRR project was launched in 2013 to connect industrial towns surrounding Bengaluru

Multiple delays

The STRR project launched in 2013 to connect industrial towns surrounding Bengaluru, including Dobbespet, Doddaballapur, Devanahalli, Sulibele, Hoskote, Anekal, Kanakapura, Ramanagara, and Magadi, has faced delays for various reasons. The note said that the four-to-six-lane access-controlled road will also connect to the Bengaluru-Chennai expressway and Tamil Nadu's Hosur, ensuring smooth transportation. The primary objective of the STRR is to prevent heavy vehicles transporting industrial goods from entering Bengaluru city, thereby decongesting urban traffic.

The note said that after being stalled since 2018, the project has now received the necessary approvals, and the project is expected to significantly benefit Bengaluru Urban, Bengaluru Rural, and Ramanagara districts while reducing traffic pressure in the city. The project will span approximately 135 km in Karnataka, and is estimated to cost ₹4,750 crore.

Mr. Kumaraswamy said Mr. Gadkari had instructed authorities to expedite the disbursement of compensation to farmers for land acquisition.

"This will benefit farmers in districts such as Ramanagara who have lost their land. This ambitious initiative by the Central government to reduce Bengaluru's traffic congestion will also be a significant contribution to industrial growth."

Officer booked for registering properties using forged documents

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Halasuru Gate police have registered an FIR against a village administrative officer of Hoskote taluk for allegedly registering three properties by forging documents four years ago.

After a detailed probe, Srinivas H., tahsildar, Bengaluru South taluk, filed a complaint with the police seeking legal action against Jamsheed Ahamed Khan on Tuesday.

According to the complaint, the accused had submitted the properties for registration on behalf of the then Bengaluru South tahsildar in July 2021. He visited the office to get the registration process done allegedly using dubious means when the tahsildar was not present at the office.

The incident came to light when a petition was filed with the Deputy Commissioner's office seeking a detailed probe. Based on the report, a probe was ordered which found that the accused misused his powers and got three properties registered after making the documents pertaining to the registration process, sources said.

The police have booked the accused under Karanata State Public Records Act.

Golden Chariot takes chartered trip route to earn more revenue

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

While 30 passengers embarked on the first trip of Karnataka's luxury train Golden Chariot after its reinauguration on December 21, 2024, as many as 65 people went on a chartered trip on December 29 that will end on February 12, 2025.

The revamped train provides two packages: Pride of Karnataka (five nights/six days) and Jewels of South (five nights/six days). Apart from this, the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) is offering chartered trips, under which an individual or a company can book the entire train and the tour will be customised accordingly.

While continuing its marketing strategies for Golden Chariot, IRCTC is taking the chartered trip route to earn more revenue and increase the train's utility.

A package named Sojourn of the South had been customised for the chartered trip which began on December 29.

A senior IRCTC official said: "A third party can book the train for chartered trips, and they will have to take the responsibility of marketing and getting bookings for that package. While the option of chartererd trips has been there since the beginning of the Golden Chariot, this time around we have gotten a very good response," the official said, adding that another chartered trip has been scheduled for February 13.

Golden Chariot is one of India's many luxury trains and is owned by the Karnataka State Tourism Development Corporation. FILE PHOTO

The Golden Chariot was inaugurated in 2020 and was revamped and rolled out again in November 2022.

The train had done only one trip after the relaunch as it did not receive enough bookings and keeping operations going with limited occupancy proved to be tough owing to hefty haulage charges.

Relaunched

This time around, the train was relaunched with renovated rooms and bathrooms, newly upholstered furniture and upgraded linen etc.

The senior official said that IRCTC has been receiving a good number of bookings from international passengers for the upcoming tours. "We have been receiving bookings from the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Singapore, and Australia as well as different parts of India," they said.

Haulage charges

The haulage charges continue to be a burden for Golden Chariot.

"We have been running the train while also requesting a reduction. But for now, there has been no concrete development," the official said.

Golden Chariot is one of India's many luxury trains and is owned by the Karnataka State Tourism Development Corporation (KSTDC). It is also being marketed and promoted with Maharajas' Express.

Any collusion with real estate mafia will not be tolerated, Chief Minister warns police officers

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah issued a stern warning to police officers on Wednesday that any collusion with the real estate mafia would not be tolerated. He emphasised that the police must create a fear-free environment for citizens and instil fear among criminals.

At a programme organised to inaugurate the newly built police housing complex at Pulikeshinagar and police stations at Chamarajpet, Cubbon Park, High Grounds, and Pulikeshinagar, he said, "The Police Department is responsible for protecting property and lives and creating a safe environment. The government is always ready to provide necessary privileges and new stations to the department. When there is peace and order in the State, the speed of development increases."

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Deputy CM D.K. Shivakumar, and Home Minister G. Parameshwara at the inauguration of Cubbon Park police station in Bengaluru on Wednesday.

The Chief Minister, while acknowledging that the crime rate is going down, warned against laziness, "But if the police are silent, criminals try to escape the law by hiding under the mat. This should not be allowed."

Home Minister G. Parameshwara said the Police Housing Corporation had given ₹28 lakh to the officers and staff of the department.

"When we looked at the houses where the police live, we found them not well-equipped. Hence, the Police Housing Scheme was started with the aim of providing decent houses and so far, 46% of the houses have been provided. The scheme will continue in the coming days."

Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar was also present at the event.

REVA University celebrates founder's day

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

REVA University marked its Founder's Day on January 6 with a special awards ceremony recognising outstanding individuals for their contributions.

Awards

Devi Prasad Shetty, renowned cardiac surgeon and chairman of Narayana Health, was honoured with REVA Lifetime Achievement Award for his work in affordable healthcare, and Malathi Holla, athlete, was honoured with the lifetime achievement award for winning medals in the Paralympic games.

The REVA Excellence Award was presented to Vikram Sampath, historian and columnist.

The event coincided with the birthday of REVA University's founder chancellor Shyama Raju.

Home Guard hacks wife, daughter, and niece to death, turns himself in

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A 42-year-old Home Guard allegedly hacked his wife, daughter, and niece to death over a domestic row at his house in Jalahalli Cross before walking into the police station in Peenya on Wednesday evening. The accused, identified as Gangaraju, was working as a Home Guard at Hebbagodi police station. The deceased have been identified as Bhagya, 36, her daughter Navya, 19, and her elder sister's daughter Hemavati, 23.

According to the police, the couple lived for six years in a rented house and Ganga Raju used to have frequent fights with his wife. The couple also had a fight on Wednesday morning and neighbours informed the Hoysala patrolling police who came and pacified the couple.

Later, the couple started to fight again and in the melee, he allegedly killed all the three before walking out with the machete to the station.

After Gangaraju walked into the station and confessed to the killing, senior police officials rushed to the house and found one body in the bathroom and the other two in the hall. The hacking was so brutal that the whole house was splattered with blood, officials said.

Female birds 'can't reproduce without male sex hormones'

Male and female chickens lacking the androgen receptor showed differences in various aspects. These aspects were hormone-dependent. Surprisingly, certain male traits, for example the length of tail feathers and of spurs, remained unaffected by the genetic modification

Madhurima Pattanayak

In the study, female chickens that lacked androgen receptors failed to develop and lay eggs. Representative image. STEPHEN MIERENDORF

The androgen sex hormones are responsible for male sexual development while oestrogen and progesterone essay the same roles in females. But new research by a team at the Max Planck Institute of Biological Intelligence and Technical University, Munich, could force scientists to redraw these boundaries. The team has reported that androgen receptors are as important for sexual development and fertility in females as in males.

Specifically, the researchers found that both male and female chickens devoid of androgen receptors turned out to be infertile. But the males still developed testicles and the females ovaries, and produced gonadal hormones. The testicles and ovaries were smaller than in chickens that retained their androgen receptors.

Additionally, female chickens that lacked the receptors failed to develop and lay eggs. And while a few sex-specific peculiarities like tail feathers, spurs, and differences in body size and weight persisted in both sexes, their sexual behaviours failed to develop. Their eye rings remained unpigmented as well.

"For years, one of the key players in avian sexual development has been reported to be testosterone, a steroid hormone belonging to the class of hormones called androgens, commonly thought of as only a male hormone," Mekhla Rudra, a scientist at the Max Planck Institute of Biological Intelligence and a coauthor of the study, said. "One of the key insights this study provides is that testosterone action via androgen signalling is critical in both male and female birds."

"The study illustrates that androgen receptors directly influenced diverse tissues leading to sex-specific phenotypes. In females, too, the effects of androgens are to promote the development of head ornaments and normal ovarian follicle," Peter O'Shaughnessy, a scientist at the University of Glasgow who wasn't involved in the study, said.

Androgen hormones are known to decrease body weight in chickens. Male chickens in commercial settings are thus castrated to prevent androgen secretion and thus increase their bodyweight.

In birds, androgen and oestrogen receptors help regulate sexual development by mediating the actions of these hormones. Unlike mammals, avian somatic cells (cells other than sperm and ova) also manifest sexual traits independent of hormonal influences. "These characteristics are independent of hormonal influence," Rudra said.

The shrinkage that wasn't

The bursa of Fabricius, a.k.a. the cloacal thymus, is a chestnut-shaped lymphoid organ in birds that develops antibodies and B lymphocytes. This organ is also known to be involved in sexual growth and maturation. When a chicken reaches pubescence – around 15-20 weeks after birth – the bursa of Fabricius shrinks in size.

This bursal involution is an androgen-sensitive characteristic that shows sexual development has begun. In the new study, chickens of both sexes lacking androgen receptors had delayed bursal involution. In some cases, the shrinkage didn't even begin.

According to the researchers, the shrinkage could be the result of cells dying in the bursa of Fabricius in response to the activity of the androgen receptors. When the scientists exposed the embryos without the ability to develop androgen receptors to testosterone, bursal involution still didn't happen. But in embryos that could develop the receptors, the shrinkage happened as well.

Of crows and combs

The bodies of roosters and male chickens have a circadian rhythm, or internal body clock, that sends strong signals for them to crow at dawn. The neural circuit associated with this crowing behaviour is sensitive to the presence of androgen hormones, especially testosterone.

In the study, male chickens without androgen receptors didn't crow even when they were exposed to testosterone a week after hatching. Their receptor-positive counterparts crowed. The researchers figured that the neural circuits responsible for crowing behaviour couldn't fully develop in the absence of the receptors.Scientists already know the syringeal motor nucleus in the hindbrain and specific midbrain regions govern crowing patterns in birds.

Likewise, comb development – an important sign of sexual maturation among chickens – didn't occur in male or female chickens birds without androgen receptors, even after they were exposed to testosterone. Receptor-positive chickens began to develop combs within 13-20 days after exposure to testosterone.

Previous studies have reported the basal layer of the comb epidermis – called the stratum germinativum – is a place where androgen-receptor genes are expressed, suggesting comb development depends on the presence of the receptors.

As O'Shaughnessy put it, "The effects of androgens in both sexes appear to be prominent in the sexually dimorphic regions of the head and gonads".

In birds unlike in mammals

A 2021 study examined male chickens whose testicles had been replaced with ovaries through genetic modification. These chickens developed their complete sexual ornaments – which shouldn't have been possible if sexual phenotypic characters were entirely under the influence of the testicular hormones. The study thus challenged the canon that these sexual characteristics in birds are regulated only by testicular hormones.

In a 2023 study, scientists showed that when androgen signalling is disrupted in (male or female) humans, the internal and external sex organs, sexual characteristics, and behaviours, couldn't develop properly.

Androgen and oestrogen hormones play their respective roles once they bind to their corresponding receptors. The dearth or impairment of these receptors eventually disrupts the function of the hormone binding to them.

To understand the function of androgen receptors in avian sexual development, the researchers blocked receptor functions – and thus androgen signalling – by knocking off the genes required to develop the receptors using CRISPR/Cas9.

"The methods used in this study are appropriate and the data are reliable," O'Shaughnessy said.

Necessary but insufficient

In sum, male chickens devoid of androgen receptors didn't display an overall female phenotype – and nor did female chickens lacking in androgen receptors develop an all-male phenotype.

A 2018 study in the *Journal of Physiology A* reported that while oestrogen receptors could contribute to sexual development in birds of both sexes, oestrogen signalling alone was insufficient for complete sexual maturation.

Androgen signalling plays a crucial role in the development, fertility, physiology and appearance of both sexes as well as sex-specific crowing behaviour in males

"The mechanism of testosterone action in the brain is complex," Rudra said. "Testosterone binds to androgen receptors ... However, in the brain, testosterone is also converted to oestrogen and exerts its role by binding to estrogen receptors, making the understanding of testosterone-mediated effects quite complicated."

According to her, the study shows androgen signalling plays a crucial role in the development, fertility, physiology and appearance of both sexes as well as sex-specific crowing behaviour in males.

"The findings in the current study are valid," O'Shaughnessy said.

Male and female chickens lacking the androgen receptor showed clear differences in various aspects compared to their normal counterparts. These aspects were hormone-dependent. Surprisingly, certain male traits, e.g. the length of tail feathers and of spurs, remained unaffected by the genetic modification.

"These traits are thus controlled by either another hormone system or something entirely different. Thus it appears that the sexual development of birds involves a complex interaction of both hormone-dependent and hormone-independent mechanisms," Rudra said.

(Madhurima Pattanayak is a freelance science writer and journalist based in Kolkata. madhurima.pattanayak@gmail.com)

Fluoride, which also occurs naturally in varying levels, helps restore minerals lost to acid breakdown in teeth. AP

Review asserts link between fluoride levels and IQ loss

Agence France Presse

A divisive new study out on January 6 in a US medical journal could reignite debate over fluoride's safety in water, linking higher exposure levels to lower IQ in children.

Published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) Pediatrics it has sparked pushback from some scientists who criticise the study's methods, defend the mineral's proven dental benefits, and warn the findings may not directly apply to typical water fluoridation levels.

Its release comes as US President-elect Donald Trump prepares to take office. His health secretary nominee, Robert F. Kennedy Jr., is a vocal critic of fluoridated water, which currently serves nearly two-thirds of the US population.

Researchers from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences reviewed 74 studies on fluoride exposure and children's IQ conducted in 10 countries, including India.

The same scientists helped formulate an official government recommendation in August that there is "moderate confidence" that higher levels of fluoride are linked to lower IQ scores.

Now, the team led by Kyla Taylor said the analysis found a "statistically significant association" between fluoride exposure and reduced IQ scores.

The review estimated that for every 1 mg/L increase in urinary fluoride, children's IQ drops by 1.63 points.

Fluoride's neurotoxicity at high doses is well known, but the controversy lies in the study's suggestion that exposure below 1.5 mg/L – currently the World Health Organisation's safety limit – may also affect children's IQ.

However, the paper doesn't clarify how much lower than 1.5 mg/L could be dangerous.

Steven Levy, a member of the national fluoride committee for the American

The review estimated that for every 1 mg/L increase in urinary fluoride, children's IQ drops by 1.63 points

Dental Association, raised significant concerns about the study's methodology.

He pointed out that 52 of the 74 studies reviewed were rated "low quality" by the authors themselves but were still included in the analysis.

"Almost all of the studies have been done in other settings where there are other contaminants, other things we call confounding factors," he told AFP, citing coal pollution in China as an example.

Levy also questioned the study's use of single-point urine samples instead of 24-hour collections, which provide greater accuracy, as well as the challenges in reliably assessing young children's IQ.

With so many uncertainties, Levy argued in an editorial accompanying the study that current policies "should not be affected by the study findings."

That said, the journal also published an editorial commending the study for its methodological rigour.

The benefits of water fluoridation are well documented. Introduced in the US in 1945, it quickly reduced cavities in children and tooth loss in adults, earning recognition from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as one of the greatest public health achievements of the 20th century.

Fluoride, which also occurs naturally in varying levels, helps restore minerals lost to acid breakdown in teeth and reduces acid production by cavity-causing bacteria.

However, with fluoride toothpastes widely available since the 1960s, some research suggests diminishing returns.

Please send in your answers to science@thehindu.co.in

THE SCIENCE QUIZ

209 years ago, Humphry Davy first tested a peculiar lamp...

Vasudevan Mukunth

QUESTION 1
The Davy lamp was a type of _____ ____ that Humphry Davy designed for use in coal mines. The design prevented the coal dust that hung in the air from catching fire from the lamp's flame. Given this purpose, fill in the blanks.

QUESTION 2
Before Humphry Davy, an English engineer named X had devised a lamp that also didn't ignore the air in coal mines, by feeding oxygen to the flame through small holes but through which the flame couldn't pass. Name X. Davy's lamp achieves the same function using a mesh.

QUESTION 3
Name the lamp X (from Q2) invented. Humphry Davy and X developed a bitter rivalry over this invention, with Davy refusing to accept X's work and X developing a distrust of experts of theoretical science.

QUESTION 4
Aside from allowing miners to work without fear of combusting coal dust, the Davy lamp also alerted them to the presence of poisonous gases, which most often caused the lamp's flame to burn in what way?

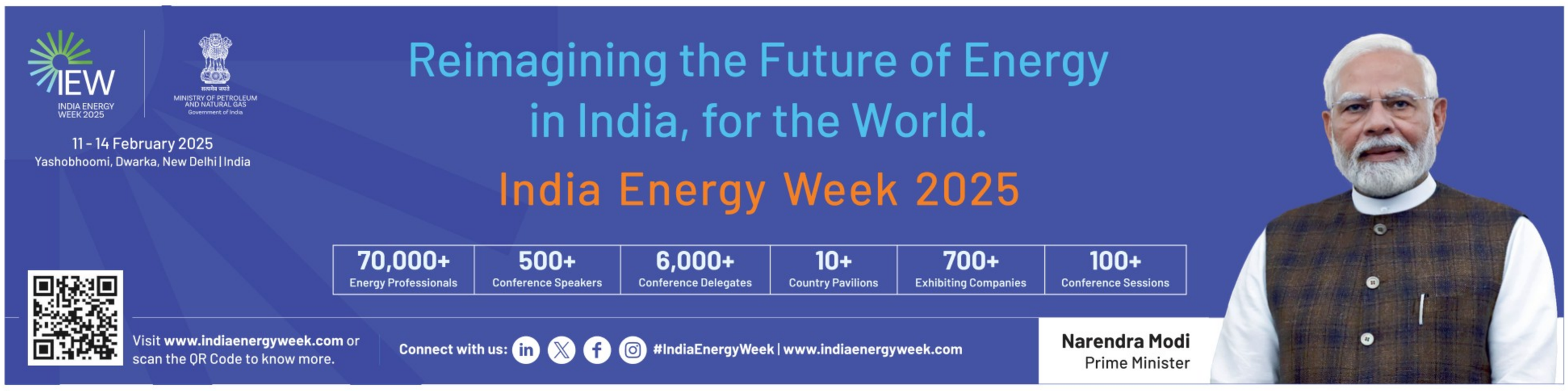
QUESTION 5
The build-up of combustible gases in a coal mine is called a _____ _____, from the German word for 'vapour.' Fill in the blanks. While Davy's lamp often alerted miners to their presence, it also led to more mining accidents because miners explored new seams of coal that they wouldn't have without the lamp.

Answers to January 7 quiz:
1. Species named for the oily substance in their heads – **Ans: Sperm whales**
2. Term denoting reproductive capacity of a species – **Ans: Fecundity**
3. Organ that the colossal squid possesses in a larger size – **Ans: Eyes**
4. Squid species growing to be larger than colossal squids – **Ans: Giant squid**
5. Phenomenon whereby deep-sea species grow to great sizes – **Ans: Abyssal gigantism**

First contact: K.N. Viswanathan | Sheney Muraly | Chandan Kumar Singha | Vijayram Ganasala | Joe V.R.

Visual: Name this town, where Davy tested his lamp for the first time in a colliery. The town also gave its name to a mediocre BBC sitcom of the 2010s. ANDREW TRYON (CC BY-SA 2.0)

For feedback and suggestions
for 'Science', please write to **science@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Daily page'



Many private schools, PU colleges start admissions ahead of schedule

Parents blame this on negligence of the government and the greed of private educational institutions

Jayanth R.
BENGALURU

With four months left for the completion of the 2024-25 academic year and the government yet to issue an official schedule for admissions for the next academic year, many private schools and pre-university colleges in the State have already started admission for 2025-26 in violation of the rules.

In fact, some elite private schools invited applications in September 2024, and completed the admission process in November itself. Some have told parents to pay the fees for the next academic year by January 30.

Parents rue that negligence of the government and the greed of private educational institutions every year result in admissions starting illegally ahead of the official schedule. The academic year 2024-25 in the State will end on April 10, after which the Department of School Education and Literacy (DSEL) will issue an order regarding the enrolment of students for the academic year 2025-26. As norms, schools and colleges in the State should start the enrolment process only at this point.

A file photo of students and parents buying application forms for PU admissions in a Bengaluru college.

However, it has been observed that this norm is often breached. "Private educational institutions are exploiting parents and children by starting the admission process ahead of schedule. Some wealthy parents are also responsible for this. Parents are paying a fat fee to enrol their children in schools before the due date. This will only create unhealthy competition among children. The government should immediately curb this trend," urged Malathi, a parent in Jayanagar.

With three months left for the completion of the class 10 exams, some prestigious private PU colleges too have already started admissions for the first PU. "Only a few seats are left, pay the advance fee and book seats for your children now," said the website of one PU college.

"Earlier, hundreds of schools in Bengaluru came under the Right to Education Act-2009, so schools did not start enrolment without government orders. However, since the RTE Act was amended in the State in 2019, no private school in the city is in the list of neighbourhood schools. Schools that have capitalised on this are starting enrolments ahead of schedule," said Mamata Kulkarni, a parent.

Decides to complain

The Karnataka State Private Schools and Colleges Parents' Association Coordination Committee has decided to complain against private educational institutions that have begun admissions ahead of schedule. "A petition will be submitted to the Chief Minister to take legal action against errant schools and colleges," said Yogananda, secretary of the committee.

"Like every year, online applications have been invited from January this year too and 31st is the last date for applying. There was a demand from parents to invite applications. Students admission will be done after conducting an entrance test," said the principal of a private school.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, K.V. Trilokchandra, Commissioner of DPI, said: "Officials have been instructed to conduct a comprehensive review of schools that have started registrations early before the government order and after obtaining complete information, notices will be served to those schools."

HC: Govt. schools should also comply with safety norms

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Observing that government schools are not exempt from various safety norms that are prescribed for private aided and unaided schools, the High Court of Karnataka has directed the Principal Secretary, Department of School Education and Literacy, to formulate a detailed action plan within six weeks and submit a report on how the government schools will also comply with those norms.

The court also directed the Secretary to create a portal within the department's website to provide details of the norms to be adhered to by all schools under various laws, the status of compliance by each school, and provision for the schools to upload the compliance status to conditions imposed by the authorities while granting recognition, etc.

Justice Suraj Govindaraj passed the order on a petition filed by Organisation for Unaided Recognised Schools (OURS), Bengaluru, and some private unaided schools.

The petitioners had questioned a 2022 circular issued by the department mandating schools to submit certificates for structural stability of the buildings and fire safety clearance, sanctioned building plans, etc.

The court did not find fault with the government seeking the certificates as these are the norms that the school authorities are required to follow under various other laws and building bylaws depending upon the location of the schools as a pre-condition for granting recognition or renewal of recognition.

However, the court found substance in the contention of petitioners that all safety-related norms are enforced only on private schools and not on government schools, while pointing out that non-adherance by government schools appears to be a major lacuna which is required to be addressed by the government.

Obligation to follow

The government has to act as a model citizen and comply with all applicable rules which it requires a private citizen to comply with, the court said, while observing that "when the State imposes certain rules, regulations and obligations to be followed by private individuals or organisations, the State and or its entities, if involved in the very same activity, are also duty-bound to follow such rules, regulations, and obligations as imposed on private individuals or organisations."

Considering that the petitioner-schools have been imparting education for several years, the court has granted them time till the commencement of the next academic year to comply with the requirements under the local municipal laws, building bylaws and all laws, rules and regulations which are applicable to them.

Tenth edition of 'Vidwat Sammilan' organised

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Kristu Jayanti College Autonomous organised the tenth edition of its 'Vidwat Sammilan' on Wednesday. The event, a platform for interactive sessions with thought leaders and institutional heads, attracted a wide audience of students, faculty members, and scholars from various fields.

The chief guest for the occasion was Sukanta Kumar Senapati, an academician and Vice-Chancellor of Shree Somnath Sanskrit University, Somnath, Gujarat.

In his address, Mr. Senapati underscored the importance of moral values as the cornerstone of a unified and prosperous society.

He said, "Morality enables individuals to fulfil their duties responsibly, thereby strengthening the fabric of the nation. A society grounded in such principles will contribute significantly to the realisation of a unified and prosperous India."

POCSO case against BSY: Victim's brother releases video seeking speedy justice

Shreyas H.S.
BENGALURU

Upset over the case related to the petition of former Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa to quash the chargesheet against him under provisions of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, dragging on for eight months now, the victim's elder brother has appealed to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to take steps to ensure speedy justice.

In March 2024, the Sadashivanagar police booked Mr. Yediyurappa under POCSO Act for allegedly sexually assaulting a

B.S. Yediyurappa

17-year-old girl on February 2, 2024, at his residence. The case was later transferred to the Criminal Investigation Department, which chargesheeted Mr. Yediyurappa in June 2024.

Following this, the former Chief Minister filed a writ petition in the High Court appealing the court to quash the chargesheet against him in July 2024. C.V. Nagesh, counsel for the accused, is yet to conclude his arguments in the case.

In a five-minute Kannada-English bilingual video titled 'Need for Justice' posted on social media, the brother said he had taken to social media with deep sorrow as his family was undergoing difficult times. "Judiciary is the only hope we have and we appeal to the State government to take the case seriously. I urge the Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister to ensure justice for my family," he said.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, he said, "My sister is now forced to appear for an exam in private due to this case. My mother who had been fighting for justice was also subjected to mental harassment. My mother successfully defeated cancer, but she still had lung issues. Due to this case, she started to ignore medical assistance and died. Even after her death, some people are tarnishing her name citing that she has filed more than 56 cases. In reality, the total number of FIRs is six and the rest are petitions given to officials, political leaders, and Ministers seeking action on these cases."

From Page One

Six Maoists surrender

Mr. Siddaramaiah also said that he would speak to the Chief Ministers of Kerala and Tamil Nadu, where these Maoists have cases pending against them and seek their cooperation to rehabilitate them.

Responding to the charter of demands placed by the Maoists, he said he would discuss it in the Cabinet and take a call.

Earlier in the day, there was some drama as the Maoists were expected to surrender before the Deputy Commissioner of Chikkamagaluru, but the venue was shifted to the Chief Minister's home office in Bengaluru.

Timings
BENGALURU

THURSDAY, JAN. 09		
RISE	06:44	SET 18:09
RISE	13:49	SET 02:01
FRIDAY, JAN. 10		
RISE	06:45	SET 18:10
RISE	14:42	SET 03:02
SATURDAY, JAN. 11		
RISE	06:45	SET 18:10
RISE	15:40	SET 04:05

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	29	18
Mysuru	30	15
Bengaluru	29	16

Bengaluru Today
28°C The weather will be dry. Morning will be cool with mist and haze. Day will be comfortable. Night also will be cool.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
29°C Morning will be cool with mist and haze. Day will be slight warm. Dry weather to prevail.

© Copyright Skymet Weather 2025
All rights reserved.

THE HINDU
DISCLAIMER: Readers are requested to verify and make appropriate enquiries to satisfy themselves about the veracity of an advertisement before responding to any published in this newspaper. THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., the Publisher & Owner of this newspaper, does not vouch for the authenticity of any advertisement or advertiser or for any of the advertiser's products and/or services. In no event can the Owner, Publisher, Printer, Editor, Director/s, Employees of this newspaper/company be held responsible/liable in any manner whatsoever for any claims and/or damages for advertisements in this newspaper.

Three from city drown in Surathkal

The Hindu Bureau
MANGALURU

The engineering graduates from Bengaluru were on a trip to Mangaluru

Three engineering graduates from Bengaluru who were on a trip to Mangaluru, drowned in the Arabian Sea in Surathkal police limits on Wednesday.

The Mangaluru City Police gave the names of the deceased as Manjunath, a native of Upparigenahalli in Chitradurga district, Shivakumar Matapathi, a native of Vijayapura district, and Sathyavelu Venkatesan, a native of Krishnagiri district in Tamil Nadu.

The three, along with Parameshwar, a native of Bidar district, left Bengaluru on Tuesday night by a car and reached Mangaluru on Wednesday morning. All were former students of AMC Engineering College in Bengaluru.

One rescued

After having breakfast at a hotel in Surathkal, the four ventured into the sea at Hosabettu beach. While three of them were swept away by strong currents, fishermen Vidyadhar and his friends were able to rescue Parameshwar.

The Surathkal police have registered a case and have sent the bodies for post-mortem.

Dr. B.R. AMBEDKAR SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS UNIVERSITY, BENGALURU

No: BASEU/34/2024 Date: 06/01/2025

ADMISSION NOTIFICATION: 2025-26

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar School of Economics University, Bengaluru invites applications for admissions to the below three programmes. All the programmes offered at the University are Full-time Residential.

- Five-year Integrated M.Sc. Economics programme as per SEP [75 seats for Indian candidates +5 seats for PIO/Foreign Nationals)
- Two-year M.Sc. Economics [30 seats for Indian candidates + 5 seats for PIO/Foreign Nationals]
- Two-year M.Sc. Financial Economics [30 seats for Indian candidates + 5 seats for PIO/Foreign Nationals)

Candidates are required to fill in a Common University Entrance Test (CUET) 2025-26 online application form and appear for the test conducted by National Testing Agency (NTA). Further details please visit **https://exams.nta.ac.in/CUET-PG/** or **https://cuetpg.ntaonline.in** Admissions to the above- mentioned courses are based on performance in CUET 2025 and as per the eligibility criteria and other details please **visit http://base.ac.in.**

Application Fee: (1) Rs.600/- for GM, OBC, (2) Rs.300/- for SC/ST/Persons with Disability and (3) Rs.1000/- for PIO/FN

- **Start date for online application: 02/01/2025**
- **Last date for online application: one week after NTA CUET 2025 UG and PG results declaration**

***All dates are subject to change depending on Government regulations.**

Sd/-
Dr. D Rajasekhar
Vice Chancellor (I/c)

DIPR/CP/4200/SHIRDISAI/2024-25

Sd/-
Prashanth Kumar M V
Registrar (I/c)

Contact us: Jnanabharathi Main Road, Nagarabhavi P.O. Bengaluru, Karnataka-560072.
Email: info@base.ac.in, Active Helpdesk: 080-29557767

APPOINTMENT

MALLA REDDY VISHWAVIDYAPEETH
(DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY)

Recognised under section 3 of The UGC Act, 1956, vide Notification No.9-4/2024-U.3(A) by Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, Government of India.
Suraram, Hyderabad, Telangana-500055.
www.mrvv.edu.in

APPLICATIONS ARE INVITED FOR THE POSITION OF VICE CHANCELLOR

Honorable Chancellor of Malla Reddy Vishwavidyapeeth, (Deemed to be University), Hyderabad has constituted search cum selection committee to recommend suitable candidate from among the experienced and distinguished academicians who meet the qualifications and experience as prescribed in the UGC (Institutions Deemed to be University) regulations 2023.

About Malla Reddy Vishwavidyapeeth

Malla Reddy Vishwavidyapeeth, Hyderabad has been conferred as Deemed to be University vide Gazette Notification No 9-4/2024-U.3(A) under Section 3 of the UGC Act, 1956 by Ministry of Education dated 06 September, 2024. Malla Reddy Vishwavidyapeeth, Hyderabad comprises constituent units in the fields of Medical, Dental, Pharmacy, Nursing and Engineering disciplines and aspires to offer new age programs that aligns with NEP2020 guidelines in the future.

Qualification/Eligibility

The incumbent shall be a distinguished academician with a minimum of ten years experience as Professor in a university or equivalent position in a reputed research organization. The candidate should also possess proven leadership and administrative qualities along with exemplary teaching and research credentials. He/She should also be willing to provide vision and direction to Malla Reddy Vishwavidyapeeth, Hyderabad in its growth trajectory.

Interested candidates are required to send their updated curriculum vitae to **hr@mrvv.edu.in** along with their qualification, experience and other relevant documents with a digital photograph on or before **Jan 23, 2025.** The applicant shall be below 65 years.

Shortlisted candidates, fulfilling all the prescribed qualification and criteria, may be invited for an interaction with search cum selection committee.

Chancellor
Malla Reddy Vishwavidyapeeth.

Published by Nirmala Lakshman at No 19&21, Bhagwan Mahaveer Road, Bengaluru-560001 and Printed by C. Sridhar at Plot No. 13-D, Bommasandra-Jigani Link Road, KIADB Industrial Area, Bommasandra, Anekal Taluk, Bengaluru-560099 on behalf of THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., Chennai-600002. Editor: Suresh Nambath (Responsible for selection of news under the PRP Act).
ISSN 0971 - 751X

Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Number of migrant expulsions by Russia in 2024

80,000 More than eighty thousand migrants in 2024 were expelled by Russia, nearly twice as many as in 2023, as the country toughens migration policies after last year's Crocus City Hall terror attack. AFP

Likely investment for Bihar's integrated manufacturing city

16,000 In ₹ crore. The Bihar government has formed the Bihar Integrated Manufacturing City Gaya Ltd to spearhead the integrated manufacturing cluster project in Gaya, which is likely to attract ₹16,000 crore of investment. PTI

People who have signed up for coverage under Obamacare

24 million. A record 24 million people have signed up for insurance coverage through the Affordable Care Act, former President Barack Obama's landmark health legislation, as the programme awaits an uncertain future under a Republican-controlled White House. PTI

Coverage of hybrid crop varieties in the total cultivated area

8 In per cent. India needs to accelerate the adoption of hybrid technology in pulses and oilseeds to address production deficits, while acknowledging the challenges faced by farmers in implementing these advanced farm practices, Principal Secretary to Prime Minister P. K. Mishra said. PTI

The increase in Guyana's oil exports last year

54 In per cent. Guyana's oil exports rose 54% last year to some 5,82,000 barrels per day, fuelled by European refiners' demand for easy-to-process sweet crudes to replace some West Asian grades, according to data from financial firm LSEG. REUTERS

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

Follow us facebook.com/thehindu twitter.com/the_hindu instagram.com/the_hindu

Why is deciphering the Indus script important?

Why has Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin announced a $1-million prize to anyone who deciphers the scripts of the Indus Valley Civilisation? Has any work in recent times pointed to the possible cultural contact between the Indus Valley and south India?

EXPLAINER

T. Ramakrishnan

The story so far:

On January 5, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin announced a $1-million prize for experts or organisations in the event of their success in deciphering the scripts of the Indus Valley Civilisation (IVC). He made the announcement at the inauguration of an international conference to mark the centenary of the IVC discovery, which was disclosed through an article published in September 1924 by the then Director-General of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) John Marshall. That the Chief Minister of a southern State in the country had made such an announcement was due to the possible Dravidian connection with the IVC. Notwithstanding the political dimension of the Dravidian concept, historians, archaeologists and linguistic scholars have been debating over the Dravidian hypothesis ever since the publication of Marshall's article.

Decoding language: Seals with the script of the Indus Valley Civilisation. WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Buried secrets: Different structures are exposed in a trench at Rakhigarhi, a Harappan site in Haryana, in 2022. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

THE GIST

- The IVC, also called the Harappan Civilisation, spanned 2,000 sites across 1.5 million sq. km. in the territories of modern-day India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan during the Bronze Age (3000-1500 BCE). It had a wider geographical area than the combined areas of its contemporary civilisations — Egyptian and Mesopotamian.
- Commissioned by the Tamil Nadu government's State Department of Archaeology (TNSDA), a study, which is morphological in nature, reveals that nearly 90% of the graffiti marks found during excavations at archaeological sites in Tamil Nadu have parallels to those found in the Indus Valley Civilisation.
- The document goes on to state that the occurrence of a large number of carnelian and agate beads and high-tin bronze objects, particularly from Iron Age graves, give a clue about the contact, as carnelian, agate, copper and tin have to come from the north or elsewhere.

How do scholars define the Indus Valley Civilisation (IVC)?

The IVC, also called the Harappan Civilisation, spanned 2,000 sites across 1.5 million sq. km. in the territories of modern-day India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan during the Bronze Age (3000-1500 BCE). It had a wider geographical area than the combined areas of its contemporary civilisations – Egyptian and Mesopotamian. Talking of the IVC's importance, Pakistan's veteran archaeologist Ahmad Hasan Dani, in the December 1973 issue of *UNESCO Courier*, observed that the Valley lies across "ancient migration routes from central and western Asia to India." The IVC introduced urban life for the first time in the valley when similar civilisations had developed on the banks of the Nile and the Tigris-Euphrates valleys.

Why is deciphering the Indus script important?

Other scripts encountered in the contemporary Mesapotomian and Egyptian civilisations had been deciphered in a more satisfying manner, But, the non-decipherment of the Indus script prevents scholars from providing a complete picture of Harappan culture, which is why scholars tend to call it a "mystery script."

What is the Dravidian hypothesis?

The Indus script carries proto-Dravidian references – this is the position of scholars including Suniti Kumar Chatterji, Father Heras, Yri Valentinovich Knorozov, Walter Fairservis, Iravatham Mahadevan, Kamil Zvelebil, Krishnamurti and Asko Parpola – which can be found in the latest study on Indus signs and graffiti marks of Tamil Nadu.

The IVC "is non-Aryan and pre-Aryan," argued Mahadevan in his article published in *The Hindu* on May 3, 2009. Attributing "solid archaeological and linguistic evidence," the scholar, who passed away in 2018, emphasised that "the Indus script is a writing system encoding the language of the region (most probably Dravidian)". Ruling out Aryan authorship of the civilisation, he hastened to add that this did not automatically make it Dravidian. Yet, "there is substantial linguistic evidence favouring the Dravidian theory: the survival of Brahui, a Dravidian language in the Indus region; the presence of Dravidian loanwords in the Rigveda; the substratum influence of Dravidian on the Prakrit dialects; and computer analysis of the Indus texts revealing that the language had only suffixes (like Dravidian), and no prefixes (as in Indo-Aryan) or infixes (as in Munda)," Mahadevan wrote. As the Dravidian models of decipherment had still little in common except certain basic features, "it is obvious that much more work remains to be done before a generally acceptable solution emerges," according to him.

What does the latest work have to offer?

Commissioned by the Tamil Nadu government's State Department of Archaeology (TNSDA), the study, which is morphological in nature, reveals that nearly 90% of the graffiti marks found during excavations at archaeological sites in the State have parallels to those found in the Indus Valley Civilisation. "...the exact shapes and their variants found both independently and in composite forms vividly indicate that they were not accidental. It is believed that the Indus script or signs would have not disappeared without any trace[s], rather they would have transformed or evolved into different forms," concludes K. Rajan, formerly professor with Pondicherry University and academic-research advisor to the TNSDA, and R. Sivanantham, joint director in the department, who carried out the study.

Defining the terms "graffiti" and "script," the duo, in a monograph, explain that all the recognisable scratches engraved on the ceramics in south India and, to some extent, on Indus ceramics are identified as graffiti. The ones engraved on seals and other metal objects of the IVC are designated as script. Even though both were written by the same people, they were differentiated and documented as script and graffiti. "However, the extensive comparative study of graffiti marks and Indus scripts evidently suggests that both are undeciphered signs," the two scholars observe.

Which project has preceded the work?

The findings of a two-year-long project of the TNSDA, called 'Documentation and Digitisation of Graffiti and Tamili (Tamil-Brāhmī) Inscribed Potsherds of Tamil Nadu', have formed the basis of the monograph.

Aimed at documenting, compiling and analysing the graffiti bearing potsherds and Tamili inscribed potsherds unearthed in archaeological excavations of the State, the project, launched during 2022-23, seeks to compare those graffiti marks with the Indus script to explore whether any cultural relationship existed between the two.

The datasets from the project suggested that 15,184 graffiti-bearing potsherds were reported from 140 sites in the State and nearly 14,165 sherds were documented. Of them, nearly 2,107 signs had been morphologically categorised within a group of 42 base signs, 544 variants and 1,521 composites. Any additional strokes added to the base signs were considered variants of the base signs while a group of signs containing more than one base sign was regarded as a composite sign. "Several signs encountered in Tamil Nadu had exact parallels in the Indus scripts. Likewise, some signs had near parallels. These signs probably evolved from the base signs. Out of 42 base signs and their variants, nearly 60% of them found their parallels in the Indus script," the document explains.

How has the question of cultural contact between the IVC and south India been explored by the work?

The monograph talks of a "possibility of cultural exchanges." Even though the occurrences of identical graffiti marks in south India suggest a kind of cultural contact, one needs more material evidence and tangible data to support or strengthen the view.

The recent chronometric dates indicate that when the Indus Valley experienced the Copper Age, south India experienced the Iron Age. "In this sense, the Iron Age of South [sic] India and the Copper Age of Indus are contemporary." If that is so, there is a "possibility of cultural exchanges either through direct or intermediate zones," the authors of the monograph point out.

The document goes on to state that the occurrence of a large number of carnelian and agate beads and high-tin bronze objects, particularly from Iron Age graves, give a clue about the contact, as carnelian, agate, copper and tin have to come from the north or elsewhere. Besides semiprecious stones and copper, a few more cultural items are required to prove the existence of contact "convincingly," the authors state, calling for future explorations, excavations, scientific investigations and historical linguistic analysis.

Three convicts die after consuming 'essence' while preparing cakes

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

Three persons serving their sentence in Mysuru Central Prison died after allegedly consuming essence used in the preparation of cakes.

The three – Nagaraju, 36, Madesha, 32, and Ramesh, 28 – died at K.R. Hospital, where they were undergoing treatment, according to Chief Superintendent of Mysuru Central Prison, P.S. Ramesh.

While Madesha from Gundlupet, who was serving life sentence for murder, died on Monday, Nagaraju, a native of Kollegal, who was also serving a life sentence for murder, died on Tuesday. Ramesh, who

A file photo of Mysuru Central Prison. None of the convicts had told doctors treating them that they had consumed the essence.

hailed from Hassan, and was serving a 10-year sentence for rape, died on Wednesday.

All the three were deployed in the bakery unit of the Mysuru Central Prison and had reportedly consumed essence used in the preparation of cake on December 24. When they subsequently took ill, complaining of stomach pain and vomiting, a team of medical officers in the jail treated them. But when their condition did not improve, they were shifted to K.R. Hospital on December 29.

Symptomatic treatment

"Unfortunately, none of them disclosed to the doctors that they had consumed essence. Hence, they were being symptomatically treated for stomachache, vomiting and headache," Mr Ramesh said.

Though doctors were perplexed with their medical parameters and questioned them, none of them had revealed that they had consumed essence while preparing cake, said Mr. Ramesh.

Normally, relatives of jail inmates are alerted whenever they are admitted to hospital.

One of them, revealed to a family member that they had consumed essence while preparing the cake and it was informed to doctors treating the convicts. "Only then did the doctors come to know about it and started treatment in that direction on January 3, but in vain. It is an unfortunate incident," Mr. Ramesh said.

BIS branch celebrates 78th Foundation Day

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), Bengaluru branch, marked its 78th Foundation Day recently with a series of events.

In her keynote address, Nagamani, head of BISB Laboratory, highlighted the role of BIS in setting benchmarks and safety standards.

Chief guest Nagahanumaiah, Director of the Central Manufacturing Technology Institute, discussed the future of manufacturing technology.

Power disruption

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Bescom has announced there will be intermittent power disruptions in parts of the city from January 9 to February 2 between 11.30 a.m. and 5.30 p.m.

Line clearance work at the 220/66/11-kV Hebbal station will cause the power cuts. The areas to be affected include Jayamahal Extension, Nandidurga Road, Jayamahal Road, Munireddypalya, J.C. Nagar, Marappa Garden, and Chinnappa Garden.

Bescom has urged residents and businesses to take necessary precautions.

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
E-AUCTION NOTIFICATION
The undersigned, on behalf of President of India, invites registered eligible Bidders to participate in E-Auction for 'Contract of installation, re-furbishing, maintenance and operation of Air-Conditioned Multi-Cuisine Rail Coach Restaurant inside Train Coach for a period of 5 years' in Mysuru and Chamarajapuram Railway stations scheduled on **20-01-2025 at 12:00 hours.**
For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
Senior Divisional Commercial Manager Mysuru
PUB/686/AAS/PRB/SWR/2024-25
South Western Railway - SWR SWRRLY SWRRLY

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
E-Tender Notice No: B-TRD-29-2024-25-OT-27 Dated : 01-01-2025
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tenders for the following work.

Name of the Work	Approx. Value
Outsourcing of TRD maintenance & breakdown activities in Baiyyappanahali (incl) - Omalur (excl), Yelhanka (excl) - Bangarapet (excl), Chik Banavar (incl) - Sampige Road (incl) Bengaluru (incl) - Jolarpettai (excl), Chik Banavar (excl) - Hassan (excl), Bidadi - Yeliyur and Yelhanka - Dharmavaram sections for 2 years period.	Rs. 17,03,87,460.74/-

Last date for submission of bids: **Upto 15:00 Hrs on 23-01-2025**
For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer/ Traction Distribution/Bengaluru
PUB/685/AAS/PRB/SWR/2024-25
South Western Railway - SWR SWRRLY SWRRLY

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
TENDER NOTICE NO. 01/2025 DATE : 03/01/2025
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tender through IREPS only for supply of following items: **Tender Closing Time: 10:30 Hrs.**

Sl.	Tender No.	Description in Brief	Qty.	Tender Due on
1	L1245301	Supply installation testing and commissioning of test rig for testing of valves of E-70 brake equipment.	01 Set.	15.01.2025
2	40241097A	150 Sq.mm Thin walled flexible elastomeric cable.	13320 Mtrs.	20.01.2025
3	33241260	Silent Block For CBC.	373 Nos.	20.01.2025
4	16241468C	Contact Beam, Ceramic resistor & Overhauling Kit.	89 Nos.	22.01.2025
5	45241192	Rectifier cum Regulator unit.	62 Nos.	23.01.2025
6	33241264	Manual uncoupling device assembly.	302 Nos.	27.01.2025
7	33245014	Design, supply, commissioning and maintenance of standalone Aspiration type automatic smoke/fire detection with brake application system.	58 Sets.	29.01.2025
8	18241290	Contactor AC 3 pole 325 Amps	54 Nos.	30.01.2025
9	38241176	Knuckle for HT (Box N).	1459 Nos.	03.02.2025
10	30241018	POH kit for modified shock absorber 600 Kg.	1720 Sets.	17.02.2025

For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in
PUB/688/AAS/PRB/SWR/2024-25 **Principal Chief Materials Manager, Hubballi**
South Western Railway - SWR sw_railways SWRRLY southwesternrailway SWRRLY

Your feedback will keep us Cleaner, Sharper and Bolder
Call our toll-free number **1800 102 1878**
Or write to us at **customercare@thehindu.co.in**
Scan the QR code to register your feedback
THE HINDU thehindu businessline. FRONTLINE SPORTSTAR The Hindu Young World THE HINDU

SOUTHERN RAILWAY
Construction Organisation
E-Tender Notice No. 18-CECNMS-2025-E-521850-II Dated : 03.01.2025
For and on behalf of The President of India, The Chief Engineer, Construction, Southern Railway, Egmore, Chennai - 600 008 invites e-tender for the following work(s) as per Notice Inviting Tender (NIT) in our portal **www.ireps.gov.in.** The tenderers/Contractors intending to apply for the tender needs to get enrolled in the portal **www.ireps.gov.in** and only **ONLINE** tenders wil be accepted.

Name of the work
Proposed Transit maintenance facilities for Vande Bharat Trains at BBQ coaching maintenance depot - Up gradation of BBQ Maintenance Depot into Vande Bharat Chair Car maintenance cum workshop Depot. (TWO PACKET SYSTEM)

Cash value (Rupees)	Earnest Money Deposit (Rs)	Period of completion (Months)	Closing Date @ 15.30 hrs
669460575.65	3497300.00	12	28.01.2025

For further details, please refer to website portal **www.ireps.gov.in** or contact office of the Chief Administrative Officer, Construction, E.V.R. High Road, Egmore, Chennai - 600 008
Tender Notice No. 16-CECNMS-2024-E-521850 Dated : 17.12.2024 STANDS CANCELLED
Chief Engineer, (Construction) Egmore, Chennai - 600 008
for and On behalf of President of India.

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given that my client **Mr. Surendra R.** is intending to purchase the Schedule Property from **Mr. S. Chandrakanth.**
Any person /firm/institution /company having any claim or right in respect of Schedule Property is hereby required to intimate in writing to the undersigned within **15 days** from the date of this publication of his /her/their claim, if any, with all supporting documents failing which the transaction shall be completed without reference to such claim and the claims, if any of such person shall be considered as waived and not binding on my client.
SCHEDULE PROPERTY
(Property Belonging to Mr. S. Chandrakanth)
ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL of residential vacant site bearing **Site No.1539** formed in Sy.No.25/3, in the Karnataka State "D" Group Employees Central Association Layout (B- Block), Erana Palya, Ward No.129-**Jnanabharathi, Srigandhadhakaval Village, Yashawanthapura Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk,** measuring East To West 50ft and North To South 30ft in all measuring about **1500 Sq.Feet** bounded on:
East By: Site No.1509, West By: Road, North By : Site No.1540, South By: Site No.1538
Sateesh S. Advocate
No.624, 2nd Floor, 15th Main, 24th Cross, BSK II Stage, Bengaluru - 560070

झारखण्ड सरकार
ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय
ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, कार्य प्रमण्डल, जमशेदपुर

ई–अल्पकालिन पुनर्निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना
ई–अल्पकालिन पुनर्निविदा संख्या:- **09/2023-24/RI/RWD/EE/JSR** दिनांक :- **08.01.2025**
कार्यपालक अभियंता, ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, कार्य प्रमण्डल, जमशेदपुर द्वारा निम्न विवरण के अनुसार e-procurement पद्धति से निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है।

क्र0 सं0	आईडेन्टीफिकेशन संख्या / पैकेज संख्या	कार्य का नाम	प्राक्कलित राशि (रूपये में) अंक में	प्राक्कलित राशि (रूपये में) अक्षर में	कार्य समाप्ति की अवधि	टेण्डर कॉल संख्या
1.	RWD/ JAMSHEDPUR/ 29/2023-24	टाटा–पटमदा मुख्य पथ बामनी टोला बरडीह से कुँदरूकोचा होते हुए गोबरघुसी तक पथ निर्माण कार्य। (लं–1.800 कि0मी0)	**2,07,16,600.00**	दो करोड़ सात लाख सोलह हजार छः सौ रू0 मात्र	12 माह	द्वितीय

2. वेबसाईट में निविदा प्रकाशन की तिथि :– **10.01.2025** ।
3. ई–निविदा प्राप्ति की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय :– **25.01.2025** अपराह्न 5.00 बजे तक ।
4. निविदा शुल्क एवं अग्रधन की राशि jharkhandtenders.gov.in के माध्यम से ऑनलाइन मोड में स्वीकार की जाएगी ।
5. निविदा खोलने की तिथि एवं समय :– **27.01.2025** पूर्वाह्न 11.00 बजे ।
6. निविदा आमंत्रित करने वाले पदाधिकारी का नाम एवं पता :–कार्यपालक अभियंता, ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, कार्य प्रमण्डल, जमशेदपुर, ब्लॉक–करनडीह, थाना–परसुडीह, जमशेदपुर, झारखण्ड, पिन–831002 ।
7. ई–निविदा प्रकोष्ठ का दूरभाष सं0– 0657–2298902 ।
8. विस्तृत जानकारी के लिए वेबसाईट jharkhandtenders.gov.in में देखा जा सकता है । **कार्यपालक अभियंता, ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, कार्य प्रमण्डल, जमशेदपुर**

PR 343840 (REO)24-25*D

JHARKHAND URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT COMPANY LIMITED
(A Government of Jharkhand Undertaking)
JUIDCO Bhawan, KutcheryChowk, Ranchi-834001
E-Maillid - juidcolimited@gmail.com
CIN: U45200JH2013SGC001752
QIT NO.: JUIDCO/QIT/Flyover/Ranchi/645 Date: 08/01/2025
REQUEST FOR QUOTATION
Very Short Quotation (RATE PURPOSE ONLY)

1.	Quotations for :	Quotations are invited from Reputed Shop-Keepers/ Manufacturers/ Suppliers/ Retailers and Distributors for different materials enlisted below & pertaining to their installation in the proximity of newly constructed flyover project at Ranchi, Jharkhand: Supplying, Transportation & Installation (Complete Job) of A. Circular Concrete Flower Pots (size-6 inch) B. Rectangular Flower Pots (size-6ft x 1.5ft. X 1ft.) C. Different Species of plants.
2.	Availability of Quotation	Online juidco.jharkhand.gov.in under the Tender Section from 09.01.2025
3.	Mode of submission of Quotation	Offline: (Through Post/By Hand in the office of JUIDCO Ltd. (JUIDCO Building ,Line Tank Road, KutcheryChowk, Ranchi 834001) Online: pdt.juidco@gmail.com
4.	Start Date of Quotation Submission	09.01.2025 from 10:00 Hrs
5.	Last Date of Quotation Submission	16.01.2025 up to 17:00 Hrs
6.	Date/Time of Quotation Opening	17.01.2025 at 17:30 Hrs.
7.	Quotation Submission Address	Jharkhand Urban Infrastructure Development Company Ltd, JUIDCO Building ,Line Tank Road, KutcheryChowk, Ranchi 834001
8.	Helpline no	+91- 9204751016

Note: - Please visit the official website of JUIDCO Ltd. (juidco.jharkhand.gov.in) for Detailed Terms & Condition and Specifications of Items.
Sd/-
Project Director (Technical)
JUIDCO Ltd.
PR 343757 Urban Development and Housing(24-25).D

SOUTHERN RAILWAY
TIRUCHCHIRAPPALLI DIVISION
E-Tender Notice No. T-SG-36-I-35-36-2024-2025 Dt : 26.12.2024
Sr. Divisional Signal & Telecommunication Engineer, Southern Railway, Tiruchchirappalli invites **ONLINE** tender on behalf of the President of India, for the following works upto **14.00 hrs on 20.01.2025**

Item No.	Tender Notice No.	Name of the work
1.	T-SG-36-I-35-2024-2025	**Comprehensive Annual Maintenance contract of Desktop Computers, Accessories and Printers in Tiruchchirappalli Division for Two years.**
2.	T-SG-36-I-36-2024-2025	**TPJ Division Various Engg Works in connection with S&T Works for the year of 2024-25**

Item No.	Advertised value	Earnest Money Deposit Amount	Validity Offer	Closing Date and Time	Period of Completion in months
1.	Rs. 20.81 Lakhs	Rs. 41,600/-	60 days	20.01.2025 @ 14.00 hrs	24 months
2.	Rs. 89.36 Lakhs	Rs. 1,78,700/-	60 days	20.01.2025 @ 14.00 hrs	12 months

If the date of opening of tenders happens to be a declared holiday at a later date, the tenders will be opened on the next working day at the stipulated time.
The detailed Tender Notice, Tender document along with terms & conditions and if any corrigendum to tender is issued can be accessed through **https://www.ireps.gov.in** GST will apply as per extent norms of GOI.
Sr. Divisional Signal & Telecommunication Engineer,
DRM Office Complex, Southern Railway, Tiruchchirappalli - 620001.

PUBLIC NOTICE
The General Public are hereby informed that My Client **Sri.Ramanath Shetty** aged about 60 years S/o Late.Narayan Shetty, residing at No.54/318, 1st Floor, 7th Main, 15th Cross, Lakkasandra Extension, Wilson Garden, Adugodi Post, Bangalore-30 has lost the original Sale Deed dated 15.07.2005 executed by **Smt.Padma and Yoshadha** in favour of **Sri.D.K.Venkatesh and Sri.P.D.Jayakumar,** registered as Document No.RJN-1-02376-2005-06, Book No.1 stored in CD.No.RJND75 on 15.07.2005, registered in the office of the Sub-Registrar Rajajinagar pertaining to his Property, any person or persons or any authority, institutions, banks, is in the possession and custody of the said document may inform the undersigned within **15 days** of the publication, failing which, failing which it will be deemed that there are no claims, charges or encumbrances whatsoever on the above mentioned property and any subsequent claims, interests or objections shall be invalid and shall not be entertained and deemed to have been waived and none has any right, title, interest and claim over the said property except by the aforesaid land owner and my client. Further, any person/ institution/ entity finds the said original documents are requested to hand over to the undersigned. Further a police complaint to the Wilson Garden PS is lodged regarding lose of above said document.
S.M. Dayanand Patil,
Patil Law Chambers, Advocates,
No. 12/4, 1st Floor, Railway Parallel Road, Neharu Nagara, Bangalore-560020
09845092283
Date: 09.01.2025 Bangalore

Govt. of Jharkhand
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
Field Survey Division, Advance Planning, Road Construction Department,
Nirupan Bhawan, 4th floor, 56-Set Chowk, Doranda, Ranchi-834002 e-mail--- eercdapfsdran-jhr@nic.in
e-Procurement Very Short Notice 3rd Call
e-Tender Reference No .-RCD/FSD /AP/ RAN/45/24-25
Dated 07.01.2025

1-	Name of Work	Consultancy services for preparation of Detailed project report for construction of road- Amtalla (Shivgadi-Dahuajor RCD road) to Neemgachi (Maharajpur-Sharmapur RCD road) road including replacement of culverts and bridges, proposal of new culverts and bridges, complete Land Acquisition Proposal including ownership details, Resettlement and Rehabilitation Proposal and Forest Diversion Proposal including clearance of all stages etc as required all complete as per latest guidelines, at Sahebganj in the state of Jharkhand. from Consultants empanelled in Category-I with the Road Construction Department, Government of Jharkhand vide letter no -3063(S) W.E dated 22-08-2022 are allowed to bid.
2-	Work completion time	45 Days
3-	Tentative Length	10.00 km
4-	Cost of Tender Document & Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	**Cost of Tender Document**: - Rs 5,000/- (Rupees Five Thousand) (Non-Refundable) through online mode only. **EMD :-** Rs- 20,000/- (Rupees Twenty Thousand) through online mode only.As per the Departmental Letter no.-4652(S) dated 06.10.2023, cost of tender document and Earnest Money Deposit will be received in online mode only through e-procurement portal (https://jharkhandtenders.gov.in) by Internet banking/ NEFT/ RTGS facility as per Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) issued by Information Technology & e-Governance Department, Government of Jharkhand vide letter no-120 dated 03.10.2023.
5-	Date and Time of Publishing of Tender on official website	10.01.2025, 05.00 PM
6-	Last date and Time of submission of Tender (With Tender Fee and EMD)	20.01.2025, 12.30 PM
7-	Date and Timing of Bid opening	21.01.2025, 12.30 PM
8-	Tender Inviting Authority	Executive Engineer, Field Survey Division, Advance Planning, RCD, Ranchi, Nirupan Bhavan, 56 set Chowk, Doranda, Ranchi- 834002, Mobile No-8051090751
9-	Mode of Bid Submission	e-Tendering (http://jharkhandtenders.gov.in)
10	PR No	341248 Road (24-25)

For further information please go through the website http://jharkhandtenders.gov.in
Executive Engineer
Field Survey Division,A.P
PR 343817 Road(24-25).D Road Construction Department,Ranchi .

केनरा बैंक Canara Bank (A Government of India Undertaking)
YELACHENAHALLI BRANCH
#25/5B/3, Sri Madeswari Complex, Yelachanahalli, Kanakapura Main Road, Benagluru – 560 078.
Email: cb4798@canarabank.com
POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable property)* [Appendix IV under the Act-rule-8(1) *

Where, the then authorized officer of the **CANARA BANK, YELACHENAHALLI BRANCH** under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, And In The Exercise Of Powers Conferred Under Section 13(2), Read With Rule 3 Of The Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 Issued A Demand Notice Dated **06.11.2024,** Calling Upon The Borrower: **(1) Sri Mahesh Kumar R S/o Ramanna P, (2) Smt Kavitha R (Guarantor)** W/o Sri Mahesh Kumar R, **Both are residing at:** No 89 Y V Annaiah Road, Yelachenahalli, Bengaluru – 560078. To repay the amount mentioned in the notice **Rs.36,61,554.59/-** (Rupees Thirty Six Lakh Sixty-One Thousand Five Hundred Fiftyty Four and Fifty-Nine Paisa Only) within 60 days from the date of the said notice.
The borrower has failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the owners of the property and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with rule 8 of the said rule on this **06th day of January of the year 2025.**
The borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of **Canara Bank** for an amount of **Rs 36,61,554.59/-** (Rupees Thirty Six Lakh Sixty-One Thousand Five Hundred Fiftyty Four and Fifty-Nine Paisa Only) as on **06.11.2024** & plus interest and cost thereon.
The borrower's attention is invited to the provisions of Section 13 (8) of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.
DESCRIPTION OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY
All that piece and parcel of the Immovable Property bearing Site/Municipal No 89(old Khata No 10/89),119 Situated with in the B.B.M.P. Ward no 185 (Yelachenahalli) measuring East to West 15 feet and North to South 45 feet, totally measuring to an extent of 675 sq. feet, situated within the B.B.M.P. Ward No 185 (Yelachenahalli) No 89 Y V Annaiah Road, Yalachenahalli, Uttarahali Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, J P Nagar Post, Kanakapura Road, Bangalore and bounded on: East by: Site No.89, West by: Site No 90, North by: Site No.38, South by: Road.
Date : 06.01.2025 **Sd/-Authorized Officer**
Place : Bengaluru **Canara Bank**

PUBLIC NOTICE
The General Public are hereby informed that My Client **Sri.Ramanath Shetty** aged about 60 years S/o Late.Narayan Shetty, residing at No.54/318, 1st Floor, 7th Main, 15th Cross, Lakkasandra Extension, Wilson Garden, Adugodi Post, Bangalore-30 has lost the original Sale Deed dated 15.07.2005 executed by **Smt.Padma and Yoshadha** in favour of **Sri.D.K.Venkatesh and Sri.P.D.Jayakumar,** registered as Document No.RJN-1-02376-2005-06, Book No.1 stored in CD.No.RJND75 on 15.07.2005, registered in the office of the Sub-Registrar Rajajinagar pertaining to his Property, any person or persons or any authority, institutions, banks, is in the possession and custody of the said document may inform the undersigned within **15 days** of the publication, failing which, failing which it will be deemed that there are no claims, charges or encumbrances whatsoever on the above mentioned property and any subsequent claims, interests or objections shall be invalid and shall not be entertained and deemed to have been waived and none has any right, title, interest and claim over the said property except by the aforesaid land owner and my client. Further, any person/ institution/ entity finds the said original documents are requested to hand over to the undersigned. Further a police complaint to the Wilson Garden PS is lodged regarding lose of above said document.
SCHEDULE PROPERTY
Item No. 1 : All that piece and parcel of the Land bearing Survey No. 63/2 measuring 14 Guntas situated at Kakolu Village, Hesaraghatta-2 Hobli, Yalahanka Taluk (then Bangalore North Taluk) and bounded on the:- East by : Land bearing Sy No. 63/3, West by : Land bearing Sy No. 59/11, North by : Land bearing Sy No. 63/1, South by : Land belonging to Benki Maramma Temple
Current Owner: Sri. K.R. Rajanna Son of Revaiah
Item No. 2 : All that piece and parcel of the Land bearing Survey No. 63/3 measuring 1 Acre 16 Guntas situated at Kakolu Village, Hesaraghatta-2 Hobli, Yalahanka Taluk (then Bangalore North Taluk) and bounded on the :- East by : Land bearing Sy No. 63/4 & 63/5, West by : Land bearing Sy No. 63/1 & 63/2, North by : Land bearing Sy No. 62/1 & 62/3, South by : Land belonging to Benki Maramma Temple & Sy No. 64/5 belonging to M. Murali
Current Owner: Sri. K.R. Rajanna Son of Revaiah
Item No. 3 : All that piece and parcel of the Land bearing Survey No. 63/5 (Old Sy No. 63/4) measuring 10 Guntas situated at Kakolu Village, Hesaraghatta-2 Hobli, Yalahanka Taluk (then Bangalore North Taluk) and bounded on the:- East by : Land bearing Sy No. 80/3 & 79/3 belonging to M. Murali, West by : Land bearing Sy No. 63/3, North by : Land bearing Sy No. 63/4, South by : Land bearing Sy No. 64/5 belonging to M. Murali
Current Owner: Smt. R. Radha Wife of K.R. Rajanna
Item No. 4 : All that piece and parcel of the Land bearing Survey No. 80/3 measuring 2 Guntas situated at Kakolu Village, Hesaraghatta-2 Hobli, Yalahanka Taluk (then Bangalore North Taluk) and bounded on the :- East by : Land bearing Sy No. 80/8 belonging to Akshay Murali & Sy No. 80/9 belonging to M. Murali, West by : Land bearing Sy No. 62/1, 63/4 & 5, North by : Road, South by : Land bearing Sy no. 79/3 belonging to M Murali
Current Owner: Sri. Revanna Son of Siddappa
Signed
Mr. Ajesh Kumar Shankar & Mr. Varun Pai
Advocates
AKS LAW ASSOCIATES
301, Sunrise Chambers,
Ulsoor Rd, Bengaluru 560042
January 8, 2025 Bengaluru

PUBLIC NOTICE
Our Client would like to inform the General Public that they intend to purchase the Schedule Property described in Item No. 1 to 4 below from its current owners.
If anybody has any charge, lien, interest or title or claim or agreement on the Schedule Property Item Nos. 1 to 4 listed below, they should come forth with copies of documents in support of such claim and produce the same to the undersigned within 7 (seven) days from the date of publication of this notice. In the event no such legally tenable claim is received within the above period, our Client shall proceed with the transaction as if no such claims exist or that they have been waived or abandoned.
SCHEDULE PROPERTY
Item No. 1 : All that piece and parcel of the Land bearing Survey No. 63/2 measuring 14 Guntas situated at Kakolu Village, Hesaraghatta-2 Hobli, Yalahanka Taluk (then Bangalore North Taluk) and bounded on the:- East by : Land bearing Sy No. 63/3, West by : Land bearing Sy No. 59/11, North by : Land bearing Sy No. 63/1, South by : Land belonging to Benki Maramma Temple
Current Owner: Sri. K.R. Rajanna Son of Revaiah
Item No. 2 : All that piece and parcel of the Land bearing Survey No. 63/3 measuring 1 Acre 16 Guntas situated at Kakolu Village, Hesaraghatta-2 Hobli, Yalahanka Taluk (then Bangalore North Taluk) and bounded on the :- East by : Land bearing Sy No. 63/4 & 63/5, West by : Land bearing Sy No. 63/1 & 63/2, North by : Land bearing Sy No. 62/1 & 62/3, South by : Land belonging to Benki Maramma Temple & Sy No. 64/5 belonging to M. Murali
Current Owner: Sri. K.R. Rajanna Son of Revaiah
Item No. 3 : All that piece and parcel of the Land bearing Survey No. 63/5 (Old Sy No. 63/4) measuring 10 Guntas situated at Kakolu Village, Hesaraghatta-2 Hobli, Yalahanka Taluk (then Bangalore North Taluk) and bounded on the:- East by : Land bearing Sy No. 80/3 & 79/3 belonging to M. Murali, West by : Land bearing Sy No. 63/3, North by : Land bearing Sy No. 63/4, South by : Land bearing Sy No. 64/5 belonging to M. Murali
Current Owner: Smt. R. Radha Wife of K.R. Rajanna
Item No. 4 : All that piece and parcel of the Land bearing Survey No. 80/3 measuring 2 Guntas situated at Kakolu Village, Hesaraghatta-2 Hobli, Yalahanka Taluk (then Bangalore North Taluk) and bounded on the :- East by : Land bearing Sy No. 80/8 belonging to Akshay Murali & Sy No. 80/9 belonging to M. Murali, West by : Land bearing Sy No. 62/1, 63/4 & 5, North by : Road, South by : Land bearing Sy no. 79/3 belonging to M Murali
Current Owner: Sri. Revanna Son of Siddappa
Signed
Mr. Ajesh Kumar Shankar & Mr. Varun Pai
Advocates
AKS LAW ASSOCIATES
301, Sunrise Chambers,
Ulsoor Rd, Bengaluru 560042
January 8, 2025 Bengaluru

प्लाज़्मा अनुसंधान संस्थान
INSTITUTE FOR PLASMA RESEARCH
भाट, गांधीनगर, गुजरात – 382 428 (भारत)
Bhat, Gandhinagar, Gujarat – 382 428 (India)
Web: www.ipr.res.in
प ऊ वि DAE ABOVE IN THE SERVICE OF THE NATION

प्लाज़्मा अनुसंधान संस्थान (IPR), गांधीनगर, गुजरात, भारत सरकार के परमाणु ऊर्जा विभाग का एक सहायता प्राप्त संस्थान है। निम्नलिखित विषयों में अत्यधिक प्रेरित इंजीनियरिंग स्नातकों से प्रशिक्षु वैज्ञानिक अधिकारी के पद के लिए आवेदन आमंत्रित किए जाते हैं।

The Institute for Plasma Research (IPR), Gandhinagar, Gujarat, is an Aided Institute of Department of Atomic Energy, Govt. of India. Applications are invited for Trainee Scientific Officer from highly motivated Engineering Graduates in following disciplines.

विज्ञापन सं. ADVT. NO. 01/2025

क्र. सं. Sr. No.	पद का नाम Name of the Post	विषय क्षेत्र Disciplines	पदों की संख्या* (विषय-वार) Number of Posts* (Discipline-wise)
1.	प्रशिक्षु वैज्ञानिक अधिकारी Trainee Scientific Officer	कंप्यूटर Computer	02
		इंस्ट्रूमेंटेशन Instrumentation	02

* उपरोक्त पदों की संख्या अनंतिम है और संस्थान की वास्तविक आवश्यकता के आधार पर इसे बढ़ाया/घटाया जा सकता है।
* The number of posts indicated above are provisional and may be increased/decreased depending on the actual requirement of the institute.

प्रशिक्षण योजना एवं कार्य विवरण / Training Scheme & Employment Description:

भाभा परमाणु अनुसंधान केन्द्र (BARC) ट्रेनिंग स्कूल ने वर्ष 2025-2026 (OCES- 2025) के लिए इंजीनियरिंग स्नातकों और विज्ञान स्नातकोत्तरों के लिए एक साल के अभिविन्यास पाठ्यक्रम के लिए ऑनलाइन आवेदन आमंत्रित किए हैं। प्लाज़्मा अनुसंधान संस्थान में प्रशिक्षु वैज्ञानिक अधिकारियों के लिए आवेदन करने के इच्छुक उम्मीदवार वेबसाइट **https://www.barcocesexam.in** पर जाकर ऑनलाइन आवेदन कर सकते हैं। Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) Training School has invited online applications for One Year Orientation Course for Engineering Graduates and Science Post Graduates for the year 2025-2026 (OCES-2025). Candidates desirous of applying for Trainee Scientific Officers in Institute for Plasma Research may apply online by visiting the website **https://www.barcocesexam.in**

आयु, शैक्षिक योग्यता, स्क्रीनिंग की विधि और अन्य सामान्य शर्तों आदि से संबंधित सभी मानदंड जैसा की OCES-2025 कार्यक्रम में दर्शाया गया है के अनुसार ही रहेंगे। All the criteria relating to age, qualification, mode of screening and other general conditions etc., shall remain the same as declared for OCES- 2025 program.

प्लाज़्मा अनुसंधान संस्थान में प्रशिक्षु वैज्ञानिक अधिकारी के रूप में उम्मीदवारों का चयन करने के लिए साक्षात्कार के अंकों (OCES- 2025) के आधार पर बनाई गई मेरिट सूची का उपयोग किया जाएगा। आईपीआर प्रशिक्षुओं को लागू दरों पर मासिक वजीफा और एकमुश्त पुस्तक भत्ते का भुगतान किया जाएगा। एक वर्ष का प्रशिक्षण सफलतापूर्वक पूरा करने पर इन आईपीआर प्रशिक्षु वैज्ञानिक अधिकारियों (आईटीएसओ) को बीएआरसी प्रशिक्षण स्कूल में आंशिक रूप से पाठ्यक्रम के लिए और आईपीआर में परियोजना कार्य के लिए आईपीआर के नियमों के तहत अन्य स्वीकार्य भत्ते सहित मूल वेतन 56100/- रुपये प्रति माह, पे-मैट्रिक्स (7 वें सीपीसी) के लेवल 10 में आईपीआर में वैज्ञानिक अधिकारी-सी के रूप में नियुक्त किया जाएगा। ये नियुक्त वैज्ञानिक अधिकारी आईपीआर के नियमों और सेवा शर्तों द्वारा शासित होंगे। आईपीआर के लिए चयनित उम्मीदवारों को केवल आईपीआर में नियुक्ति के लिए विचार किया जाएगा, न कि परमाणु ऊर्जा विभाग की किसी अन्य इकाई या संस्थान में।

The merit list created out of Selection Interview Marks (OCES- 2025) will be used to select candidates as Trainee Scientific Officer in the Institute for Plasma Research. The IPR Trainees will be paid monthly stipend and one time book allowance at the applicable rates. On successful completion of the one year training, partly for course work at BARC Training School followed by project work at IPR, these IPR Trainee Scientific Officers (ITSOs) will be appointed in IPR as Scientific Officer-C at a basic pay of ₹ 56100/- per month in the Level 10 of pay matrix (7th CPC) plus other allowances as admissible under rules of IPR. These appointed Scientific Officers will be governed by terms and service conditions of IPR. The candidates selected for IPR will only be considered for appointment in IPR, not to any other unit or institute of DAE.

उम्मीदवारों को सलाह दी जाती है कि वे वेबसाइट **https://www.barcocesexam.in** पर दिये गये निर्देशों को ध्यान से पढ़ें।Candidates are advised to read the instructions carefully by visiting website **https://www.barcocesexam.in**

कार्यवाहक मुख्य प्रशासनिक अधिकारी Acting Chief Administrative Officer

FROM THE ARCHIVES

How the UAPA, a draconian law, is wrecking lives

The UAPA prohibits a judge from granting bail if, on a perusal of the police diary or the police report, the judge is of the opinion that there are 'reasonable grounds for believing that the accusation is ... prima facie true'

Gautam Bhatia

On January 7, Delhi police opposed the bail pleas of activists Umar Khalid, Sharjeel Imam and others, who are accused in the 2020 north-east Delhi riots case. These activists have been jailed under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), 1967. In this article, dated August 7, 2022, Gautam Bhatia talks about how the UAPA brings in elements of a trial into a bail hearing.

On March 24, a Sessions Court in Delhi denied bail to Umar Khalid as part of a set of cases that have commonly come to be known as "the Delhi riots cases". The case of the police was that Mr. Khalid was one of the conspirators behind the February 2020 violence in Delhi, which had claimed more than 50 lives. For this, Mr. Khalid, along with many others, was charge-sheeted under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), 1967, and jailed pending trial. Mr. Khalid has been in jail for over 500 days. The trial has not yet begun.

Much has been written about the serious problems with the manner in which the Delhi Police has conducted its investigation, and prosecution of the Delhi riots: in particular, its selective targeting of activists who were involved with the protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act of 2019, which was the alleged trigger for the violence, while refraining from prosecuting individuals who are on record delivering incendiary speeches. The denial of bail to Mr. Khalid highlights an equally serious problem: the broken nature of India's criminal justice system.

Bail hearing becomes trial

First, consider these facts. Mr. Khalid's bail application was filed in July 2021. The order denying bail was passed eight months later, after multiple hours-long hearings, multiple adjournments, and three deferrals of the order itself. It is important to ask why an application for bail took so many hearings and eight months to decide: in criminal law, the purpose of bail is to ensure that an individual is not unjustly denied their liberty while the trial against them is still proceeding and their guilt has not yet been established. As such, in normal circumstances, courts are supposed to consider whether an accused is a flight risk, or is likely to tamper with evidence or intimidate witnesses. If neither of those dangers exist, there is no purpose in denying an individual their freedom before their guilt has been established in a court. This, in other words, is the real meaning of the hoary phrase 'innocent until proven guilty'.

This is where the notorious UAPA comes in. Shorn of legalese, the UAPA prohibits a judge from granting an individual bail if, on a perusal of the police diary or the police report, the judge is of the opinion that there are "reasonable grounds for believing that the accusation is ... prima facie true." The effect of this, as the criminal legal scholar Abhinav Sekhri has pointed out, is that the UAPA introduces elements of the criminal trial into the question of bail. There are traces of this in the Indian Penal Code as well, for bail under serious non-UAPA offences. This hints at a larger problem with the criminal justice system, of which the UAPA is only the starkest example. Questions of guilt or innocence are meant to be determined at the end of a trial, after evidence has been sifted, witnesses examined and cross-examined, and arguments completed. The question of guilt or innocence at the stage of bail short-circuits that essential procedure.

But that is not the only problem with turning bail hearings into mini-trials. The problem is also that this mini-trial – to borrow a colourful phrase from the U.S. Supreme Court – licenses "one side ... to fight freestyle, while requiring the other to follow the Marquis of Queensberry Rules (i.e., the rules of professional boxing)". What the judge has before them is entirely one side of the case: the police version. In a trial, the defence would be entitled to cross-examine the prosecution's witnesses, determine inconsistencies in their testimony, examine its own witnesses, present its own evidence, and otherwise demonstrate that the case against the accused has not been made out beyond reasonable doubt. In a bail hearing, the defence can do none of that. The starting point of the bail hearing is the presumption that everything in the police report is true. Based on that presumption, all the two sides can then argue about is whether according to these "facts", the legal ingredients of the offence are fulfilled – or, in some rare cases, about whether the facts themselves are self-contradictory or flat-out implausible, so that no reliance can be placed on them even at the stage of bail. To use an analogy, it is like holding a debate between two sides, stopping it after one side finishes, allowing the other side to pose two or three questions but not say anything more, and then deciding whether the motion passes or falls.

Such a system might possibly be defensible in a situation where criminal justice was swift, efficient, and trustworthy. If, for example, criminal trials habitually concluded within six months, it might just be possible to argue that in terrorism cases, six months of pretrial incarceration is a painful but proportionate price to pay (in my opinion, it is still unjustifiable, but there is at least a case to be made). However, that is not the case in India: a UAPA trial takes years – often more than 10 years. In such a situation, the court's decision on bail, de facto, becomes the decision on the case: the denial of bail means that a person is likely to spend a decade or more behind bars, as the trial winds on. And given the UAPA's abysmally low conviction rates, the trial will likely end in acquittal.

This, thus, explains why bail hearings take so long, and are so convoluted (although there is still little excuse for the eight-month-long process in Mr. Khalid's case). Both the defence and the prosecution know that the outcome of the bail hearing is, for all practical effects, the outcome of the case itself. The result of the denial of bail is, functionally, the same as the result of a finding of guilt: a decade-plus in jail. But, as we have seen, while the denial of bail is effectively a finding of guilt, it has none of the safeguards that the criminal law puts into place before an actual finding of guilt. The accused is first gagged from contesting the police's version and is then condemned for not being able to disprove the police's case.

Rank injustice

In a notorious judgment in *National Investigation Agency v. Zahoor Ahmad Shah Watali* (2019), the Supreme Court made a bad situation even worse by forbidding the lower courts from scrutinising in depth even the police case. This leads to absurd situations like Mr. Khalid's bail order.

A reading of the bail order shows that the court reproduces various allegations against Mr. Khalid – some of them hearsay, and therefore inadmissible during the trial, and some extremely implausible; dismisses the defence's challenges to them without any engagement; and then denies bail. Lawyers and legal scholars may disagree over whether the UAPA actually requires the courts to become stenographers for the prosecution, even under existing legal doctrine. The point, however, is that for all the reasons we have discussed above, the result is rank injustice.

Reforming the criminal justice system is the task of many years. In the immediate future, however, it is at least possible to curtail the manner in which the UAPA plays havoc with the lives of so many individuals.

Striking down or reading down its bail prohibitions and subjecting the police case to stricter scrutiny during bail hearings would be a start. It remains to be seen whether the judiciary has the will and the inclination to do so.

Gautam Bhatia is a Delhi-based lawyer.

GETTY IMAGES

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

K. Subrahmanian
S. Upendran

"Did you or didn't you see the film?"

"That's what I'm trying to tell you. No sooner had I reached the ticket counter when the crowd..."

"... 'than', not 'when'."

"What?"

"The expression is 'no sooner..... than', not 'no sooner.,, when'. No sooner had the bell rung than the students came running out of their classrooms."

"No sooner had the star arrived than a loud cheer went up.'

"Good. I'm going to make some coffee. How would you like yours?"

"I...er... Well, I..I.."

"As it comes?"

"As it comes? As what comes?"

"The coffee, of course. When somebody asks you how you would like your coffee or tea, and you reply as it comes', you mean you do not mind how strong or weak it is."

"In other words, I'm willing to drink what is given to me. I have no preFERence."

"That's right. P..r..e..f..e..r..e..n..c..e is pronounced PREference. The stress is on the first syllable."

"First syllable! Really? PREference. Rhymes with the word REference, doesn't it?"

"Yes, it most certainly does. Now, about the coffee. Will you take it as it comes?"

"Oh no! I'd like mine to be strong, please. Really strong... You've been spending a lot of your time in the kitchen lately. What's the reason?"

"I'm learning to be a househusband."

"A househusband! What's that?"

"Why don't you figure it out yourself?"

"Hm...let's see. A 'housewife' is someone who looks after the home. The husband goes out to work and she takes care of the home."

"You're on the right track."

"So a 'househusband' would be a man who looks after the house, while the wife has an outside job."

"Exactly!"

"A man looking after the house!"

"There's nothing wrong with it."

"I never said there was. But you would make a lousy househusband."

"Why do you say that?"

"This coffee! It tastes terrible. By the way, do you know that 'husband' can be used as a verb also?"

"I know."

"What does it mean?"

"To work as a husband."

"No. It means 'to use sparingly and economically." We must husband our resources. "It is a formal word."

Published in The Hindu on August 30, 1994.

THE DAILY QUIZ

A quiz to mark the 18th edition of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas being held in Bhubaneswar

V.V. Ramanan

QUESTION 1
Why was January 9 chosen as Pravasi Bharatiya Divas and in which year was the inaugural event held?

QUESTION 2
The past 17 editions have been held in various Indian cities. Which city has hosted the event the most number of times and where was the last edition held?

QUESTION 3
What major change was initiated to the PBD in 2015?

QUESTION 4
What was special about the edition held in 2021?

QUESTION 5
What is the theme for this year's Pravasi Bharatiya Divas?

QUESTION 6
The Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) is sponsored and organised by the Ministry of External Affairs. Which two leading organisations also collaborate with the MEA in celebrating the event?

QUESTION 7
What is the name of the award given to to honour exceptional overseas Indians?

Visual question:
Identify this former President and Premier of an African nation who was the first chief guest in 2003. FILE PHOTO

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. This film is about a Mexican drug lord who changes gender. **Ans: *Emilia Pérez***
2. This TV series is set amid the emerging threat of civil war in Japan in 1600. The writer of the book was a young officer in the Royal Artillery. **Ans: *Shōgun*; James Clavell**
3. The reason why naming Pia Zadora the new star of the year in 1982 was controversial. **Ans: The film, *Butterfly*, wasn't even out yet**
4. This actor refused his Golden Globe award and Academy Award in the 1970s for this cult film. **Ans: Marlon Brando; *The Godfather***
5. Payal Kapadia lost her Best Director Award to Brady Corbet, who won it for this film. **Ans: *The Brutalist***
6. This actor holds the highest number of nominations at the Golden Globe awards. **Ans: Meryl Streep**
Visual: Name the three people here. **Ans: Fred Astaire, Jane Fonda, and John Travolta**
Early Birds: Siddhartha Viswanathan| Rajmohan Velayudhan| Tito Shiladitya| Mohan Lal Patel| K.N. Viswanathan

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

Word of the day

Gelid:
extremely cold

Synonyms: arctic, frigid, glacial, icy, polar

Usage: *She could not long survive the gelid waters of the lake.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/gelidpro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ˈʤɛlɪd/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

- Implemented **Sports Policy-2023**
- **1,000 Sports Nurseries** to be established at the cluster level, with 250 nurseries already launched in the first phase
- **₹88 Crore** distributed to players under various sports competitions
- **₹12.50 Crore** awarded to 19 players from Punjab participating in the Paris Olympics
- **₹29.25 Crore** awarded to 58 players from Punjab participating in the Asian Games
- Three Seasons of **'Khedan Vatan Punjab Diyan'** successfully organized
- 11 Renowned Players given jobs as **DSPs and PCS officers**

2220/13/295/2023/40557

Scan Here

Join Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann's official WhatsApp channel

Department of Information and Public Relations, Punjab

Families of Maoists eager to welcome them back

They want govt. to consider demands for which the surrendered Maoists fought all these years

Sathish G.T.
CHIKKAMAGALURU

Sheshe Gowda, 65, elder brother of Mundagrau Latha, a Maoist who surrendered on Wednesday to join the mainstream, said he had not seen his sister in the last 15 years. "I am happy that she is coming back. We will take care of her if the government releases her," he said.

"She did not come home regularly when she joined a training in tailoring at Jayapura in Koppa taluk. We heard that she had joined the arms struggle. When I enquired where she had been, she insisted that I should not worry about her. However, we, her family, suffered. The police kept asking about her whereabouts. They suspected that we had been supporting her," Mr. Sheshe Gowda said.

Mr. Sheshe Gowda said his sister, who has studied up to class 5, did not visit the family when her mother and brother died.

The Maoists who joined the mainstream, in Bengaluru on Wednesday.

Tamil Selvi, 63, mother of K. Vasanthan, Maoist from Tamil Nadu who surrendered, told the media that she had not met him for over a decade. "After completing engineering, he left home saying he would attend job interviews in Coimbatore. I do not know where he went. I got a call from the police and came here to meet him," she said in tears.

Ambanna Arolikar, brother of Mareppa Aroli, said his brother left home 25 years ago and was never seen since. "

This is a joyous moment for our family. As he did not return for a long time, my father and brother felt that he was dead. We are all happy that he is returning to the mainstream now," he said.

The family members wanted the State government consider the demands for which the Maoists fought all these years and also withdraw "false cases" filed against them. "They joined the movement to fight for the poor people. They had no personal intentions. The government should ensure the cases are heard by a fast-track court," Mr. Arolikar demanded.

Maoists who gave up arms

Mareppa Aroli alias Jayanna Aroli village in Raichur district, 50 cases

Hailing from a Dalit family, he had to discontinue his studies after completing II year BA. Disturbed by the encounter of a Maoist activist, he joined the armed struggle in 2000, when he was 24.

K. Vasanthan, Arcot in Vellore district, 9 cases

A BTech graduate, he joined the armed struggle in 2010 immediately after completing his education. He has been active in Kerala and Karnataka.

Sundari Kuttaluru Belthangady in Dakshina Kannada district, 71 cases

Hailing from an Adivasi family, she discontinued her studies after class 3 owing to poverty. Her family was threatened with displacement due to the Kudremukh National Park. She joined the Maoist movement in 2004 when she was 19.

Vanajakshi, Mudigere in Chikkamagaluru district, 25 cases

Senior-most member of the Maoist group active in Karnataka, she is an Adivasi who has studied up to class 10 and was a tailor. She was a member of the gram panchayat in Mudigere, but reportedly could not save her family's small parcel of land from some powerful people. She joined the armed struggle in 2000.

Jisha, Makkimala in Wayanad district, 18 cases

Youngest member of the Maoist group, she is an Adivasi who had to discontinue her education after class 8. She joined the armed struggle in 2018 in Kerala. She moved to Karnataka a year ago.

Mundagaru Latha, Sringeri in Chikkamagaluru district, 85 cases

Hailing from an Adivasi family, she dropped out of school when in class 6 due to poverty and 'harassment' by a teacher. Her family was threatened with displacement due to the Kudremukh National Park. She joined the armed struggle in 2000, at 18.

Key demands placed by them

- Kasturirangan report must be rejected
- Kudremukh National Park tag should be removed
- Hi-tech tourism must stop
- and the environment must be protected
- Adivasis should have all rights over forests
- Karnataka government should allot five acres to all landless families, and give permanent land record
- All Adivasi families should be given houses and land

Lone Maoist from State still at large

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Even after the surrender of six Maoists on Wednesday, Kotehonda Ravi from Kigga near Sringeri, is the lone Maoist from the State who is still at large.

Kotehonda Ravi had separated from the group of eight Maoists, who were active in Wayanad, Kerala, and shifted to Karnataka a year ago, much before the encounter of another Maoist leader Vikram Gowda in November 2024. He separated from the group over personal differences and has been untraceable, sources said. "He is neither active nor in touch with the present group who joined the mainstream. All efforts to contact him and to convince him to join the mainstream failed. The civil society also couldn't make any contact with him. His whereabouts are unknown," said a senior police official.

Is this surrender of Maoists or the govt.? asks Sunil Kumar

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

BJP leader V. Sunil Kumar has taken exception to Maoists surrendering in front of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah rather than before the police.

In a social media post, Mr. Kumar argued that the Maoists should have surrendered either before the Superintendent of Police concerned or the Sub-Inspector of Police.

"But in this case, the Chief Minister of six crore Kannadigas is bending over backwards to welcome them at his office," he remarked.

Alleging that allowing the Maoists to surrender in front of the Chief Minister would "crush the morale of police", he said Mr. Siddaramaiah had "yielded to the pressure of intellectuals". He demanded that the government should clarify to people the parameters based upon which surrender package had been extended to the Maoists.

> We are joining mainstream abjuring the path of violence to continue our pro-people struggle in a democratic and constitutional way.
>
> **MUNDAGARU LATHA**

> I am hopeful of support from the governments of Karnataka and Kerala and society to continue our struggle in a democratic manner.
>
> **JISHA**

> We do not believe in leading youngsters astray by giving them lathis, swords, and trishuls and making political capital out of it. We would rather bring those who have gone astray back to mainstream and turn them into good citizens.
>
> **SIDDARAMAIAH**
> Chief Minister

Will soon take a call on dissolution of Anti-Naxal Force, says Siddaramaiah

K.V. Aditya Bharadwaj
BENGALURU

With six Maoists known to be active in the State surrendering, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said the government will soon hold a review meeting and take a call on the dissolution of the Anti-Naxal Force (ANF).

"We have taken a big step towards making the State "Naxal-free". We will hold a security review meeting with our officers and take a call on dissolution of ANF," he said, addressing media persons after six Maoists surrendered before him in Bengaluru on Wednesday.

ANF was formed in the aftermath of the encounter of Maoist leader Saketh Rajan and retaliatory attack by the Maoists killing seven Karnataka State Reserve Police Force (KSRP) personnel in Pavagada in February 2005.

Anti-Naxal Force personnel at Pittabailu, near Hebri, in Udupi district where an encounter took place resulting in the death of Vikram Gowda, in November 2024.

"Forest brigand Veerappan was killed in October 2004 and the Special Task Force (STF) was to be disbanded. The same personnel, who had experience in anti-insurgency activities, were posted to ANF," a senior official recounted.

Presently, the Karkala-headquartered ANF has over 500 personnel with 17 camps across the State.

The group of eight Maoists had moved back to Karnataka only less than a year ago from Kerala, to where they had moved years ago. In the intervening years when the Maoist movement in the State had come to a standstill, there were calls to disband ANF.

However, senior police officials had then argued that the ANF was needed to patrol the Karnataka areas of the Karnataka-Kerala-Tamil Nadu tri-junction point to ensure Maoist movement does not spring back to life again in the State.

A senior official made the same argument on Wednesday as well. "Maoists have surrendered, but Maoism is not dead. We cannot let our guards down," he argued.

> We have taken a big step towards making the State Naxal-free. We will hold a security review meet with our officers.
>
> **SIDDARAMAIAH**
> Chief Minister

Change of venue at the last minute takes everyone by surprise

The Hindu Bureau
CHIKKAMAGALURU
BENGALURU

The six Maoists, who surrendered in Bengaluru on Wednesday, were initially supposed to appear before the Chikkamagaluru district officers and representatives of the district-level committee to oversee the process. However, the programme was shifted to Bengaluru for it to be conducted in the presence of the Chief Minister, even as family members of Maoists were waiting at the Inspection Bungalow of Chikkamagaluru town.

In earlier instances of surrender of Maoists, they did so before the district administration in Shivamogga and Chikkamagaluru districts.

The vehicles carrying the Maoists left an undisclosed place near Sringeri in the morning but did not stop at Chikkamagaluruu. The venue was changed midway.

The venue was shifted to Bengaluru for the surrender to be held in the presence of the CM, even as families of Maoists were waiting in Chikkamagaluru

By then, the family members of the Maoists and senior members of Shantigagi Nagarikara Vedike, including senior writer and former Minister B.T. Lalitha Naik, had assembled at the Inspection Bungalow. A few former Maoists, who returned to the mainstream earlier, were also present.

K.L. Ashok of Shantigagi Nagarikara Vedike informed the media that the Maoists would return to the mainstream in the presence of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah in Bengaluru.

'Happiest person'

Responding to criticism from the Opposition BJP over surrender of Maoists, a senior functionary of the government said Union Home Minister Amit Shah himself was appealing to Maoists to surrender. He recalled that Mr. Shah had met surrendered Maoists in December 2024 at Chhattisgarh and said he was the "happiest person" as painstaking efforts to convince them to join the mainstream had borne fruit.

"Moreover, these Maoists have surrendered based on the appeal by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah," he said.

Mr. Siddaramaiah had appealed to Maoists fighting in the forests of the State to join the mainstream a few days ago.

Rajanna hits out at Congress central leaders for halting dinner meeting of SC/ST leaders

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Cooperation Minister K.N. Rajanna, who belongs to the Scheduled Tribe community, has hit out at the Congress high command for instructing Home Minister G. Parameshwara to cancel the Congress SC/ST legislators, Ministers, MPs, and former legislators' dinner meeting scheduled on Wednesday. He termed it as "injustice to the SC/ST communities".

Mr. Rajanna asked if the central leaders were "anti-SC/ST". The meeting has been postponed, he told reporters in Tumakuru on Wednesday.

The meeting of SC/ST leaders aimed to discuss the issues related to implementation of welfare schemes. Many SC/ST students have been denied scholarships and hostel facilities. it was not good on the part of Randeep Singh Surjewala, AICC general secretary in-charge of Karnataka, to issue instructions to senior leaders such as Dr. Parameshwara to halt the meeting, said Mr. Rajanna, a Minister loyal to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah.

K.N. Rajanna

Relying to a question on Mr. Rajanna's comment, Deputy Chief Minister and KPCC chief D.K. Shivakumar said: "I don't know about it. I will reply after examining it".

Meanwhile, Dr. Parameshwara said the dinner had to be postponed following instructions from Mr. Surjewala as he wanted to attend it. The meeting was intended as a preparatory discussion for an SC/ST convention aimed at consolidating community support for the party. Dr. Parameshwara said he has now invited Mr. Surjewala to join the meeting whenever it is rescheduled. "There is no political motive behind this," he said. "Since the AICC general secretary requested a temporary postponement, we obliged," he clarified.

CLP meeting on Monday

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, who is also the Congress Legislature Party (CLP) leader, has convened a meeting of the CLP on January 13 at a private hotel in the city.

The CLP meeting assumed significance in the wake of a group of leaders holding meetings and issuing statements on the tenure of the Chief Minister and change of the KPCC president. The KPCC general body meeting will be held on January 13, said KPCC chief and Deputy CM D.K. Shivakumar.

The development follows Mr. Siddaramaiah's January 2 dinner meeting with select SC/ST Cabinet colleagues, which created a buzz within the ruling party amid speculation about a possible change of guard in the State this year under a "power-sharing" formula.

However, Congress sources said the decision to postpone the dinner meeting came after Mr. Shivakumar, a chief ministerial aspirant, met the party's central leaders in New Delhi on Tuesday to discuss party developments.

On whether Mr. Shivakumar had "complained" to the high command, the Home Minister said: "I don't know about that." There was a discussion on inviting Mr. Shivakumar to the preparatory meeting. "There is nothing to hide. If we have to do politics, we will do it openly. There are several issues faced by the Dalit community that need to be discussed."

'Govt. committed to paying advance of ₹9,500 to ASHAs'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao on Wednesday said that the government is ready to pay ASHAs an advance payment of ₹9,500 every month instead of the fixed honorarium of ₹8,000. He said this after talking to ASHAs who were protesting at Freedom Park.

Around 25,000 workers began their indefinite strike on January 7 for various demands from the government. While appealing to the workers to end their protest, the Minister assured that he will discuss with the Chief Minister to increase the honorarium in the upcoming Budget.

When the ASHAs brought up their demand for fixed leaves, Mr. Rao responded positively and said that it was their right.

Government of Karnataka (Zilla Panchayat Gadag)
District Officer, Minority Welfare Department,
Gadag Moulana Azad Minorities Bhavan, Opp. Gadag District Court, Hubballi Road, Gadag
e-mail: domingadag2013@gmail.com
Phone No.: 08372-297494

No.: DOMWD/Gadag/CR- /2024-25 Date : 08.01.2025

E-Procurement Tender Notice

Tender is invited through e-procurement in two cover system from Officially registered Eligible suppliers to supply food grains and other items to all the Hostels/Residential Schools/Colleges coming under Minority Welfare Department in Gadag District. Tender details are as below.

Tender No. : MWD/2024-25/IND0089,
EMD Amount : **5,96,625-00**

Tender document can be availed and submitted in website: https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/ and last date for submission of tenders is dated **10-02-2025** upto 5.30 PM. For further information please contact office phone No. 08372-297494

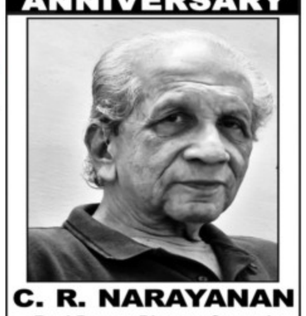
Sd/- (AMIT BIDARI R) District Officer, Minority Welfare Department, Gadag

DIPR/Gadag/KSMCA/522/2024-25

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

SECOND ANNIVERSARY



C. R. NARAYANAN
Retd Deputy Director General
Geological Survey of India
DOB : 4th May 1936
DOD : 9th January 2023

He was our guiding light and lived life on his own terms, being the rock we all depended on. He shall be cherished in our hearts forever.

Dhruv Vijairam, Ramya Vijayram, Priya Vijayram and C. Vijayram, C. Vijayanand

DEATH

SAD DEMISE

SANKARI RAMASUBBAN
(Jing, as she was fondly known) attained the lotus feet of Goddess Sharadamba on 7th Jan 2025, in Chennai. Beloved by all, she is survived by her husband KK Ramasubban (Ramji), daughters Srividya and Bharathi, son in law Vinay and grandchildren (Pramodh, Karthik and Medha).
Contact: 9940043723/9840815108

In loving memory of
SHRI C.K. JAYA RAJAN
(91yrs)
(Retd. P.R.O. HAL, B'lore)
left for his heavenly abode on 06.01.2025

Deeply mourned by
Family and Friends
9941908225

7TH DEATH ANNIVERSARY

Born 02.03.1937 Death 09.01.2018

B. PURUSHOTTAM & CO
Chartered Accountants
Pay respectful homage to
Sri. B. ANANTHARAMAKRISHNA
Fondly remembered by:
Partners, Staff, Family and Friends

How Bengaluru's night and early morning workers brave the cold at this time of the year

The Hindu talks to a number of such people and shares their experiences about carrying on with their tasks

Yemen S.
BENGALURU

Sipping a cup of takeaway coffee or hot chocolate from your favourite cafe, turning the heater on in the car, and just driving around the city enjoying the crisp air... These are the winter joys of an upper crust Bengalurean. But in the world of Rajesh Gowda, a cab driver who takes most of the airport pickups through the night and morning, winter is a different ball game. With soaring petrol and diesel prices, turning on the heater of his cab amid the extreme cold is not an option.

Bengaluru has witnessed a significant drop in temperature this winter, especially from mid-December, 2024. The Meteorological Centre, Bengaluru, in its observation data recorded at 8.30 a.m. on January 8, said that the minimum temperature recorded at the city observatory was 16.4 °C. The minimum temperatures recorded at HAL Airport and the Kempegowda International Airport were 15.2 °C and 15.0 °C. Just before that, on January 4, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) alerted a significant drop in temperatures, with the predicting a minimum of 10.2 °C, which is below the city's January average minimum of 15.8 °C and is attributed to the cold wave sweeping across northern India.

As one of the coldest winters in a long time sweeps the city, night and early morning workers from across the city share with *The Hindu* how they manage to work amid the extreme weather conditions.

Pourakarmikas in early winter morning. SUDHAKARA JAIN

Bengaluru has witnessed a significant drop in temperature this winter, especially from mid-December, 2024. SUDHAKARA JAIN

Just keep driving

Gowda said the only way to keep himself warm is to just working. "If I sit idle, I start feeling cold, so I make sure I am constantly taking trips, if not I keep walking through the parking lot at the airport. It is very hard to take a short nap in the weather, so the best option is to keep moving. Most drivers are used to being in cold conditions, because Bengaluru is usually cold during the nights throughout the year, but winters are definitely more difficult even for us. I would love to turn on the heater in the car while waiting for my customers, but the cost of fuel is so high, and I cannot afford to do it. Winter is for another month, and I will somehow continue to manage," he explained.

Similarly, 28-year-old Hanumanthappa, another cab driver, says the nights are freezing no matter how many sweaters or caps he wears. "The cold is really bad this year. I carry a flask of hot water to keep myself warm, and sometimes I stop at a Darshini if they are open or a roadside stall for a quick cup of coffee or tea. Despite the weather the work doesn't stop, someone always needs a ride, whether it is to Majestic, the railway station, the airport, or home after a late shift. Bengaluru never really sleeps, and neither do we, no matter the weather conditions. Knowing I'm helping people reach home safe, especially in this weather, keeps me going. It is like all of us out here at night, auto and cab drivers, food delivery boys, we are all together for the city," Hanumanthappa said.

To keep city clean

The situation is similar for those who begin work early in the morning. Says Lakshmi K., a Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) Pourakarmika, "The cold mornings are the hardest. By the time we step out at around 4.30 a.m., the streets are covered in a thin layer of mist. I wear a sweater, wrap a thick shawl over my uniform and wear gloves that are provided to us by the BBMP, but the cold gets to you even when you're sweeping nonstop, and you are constantly moving. Sometimes, the dust mixes with the mist and sticks to our faces or makes it hard to breathe, but we have been doing this for many years, and our body has gotten used to this."

Footpath vendors gathered early morning to distribute and sell vegetables fruits and flowers near K.R. Market. SUDHAKARA JAIN

A tea seller serving his customers early in the morning in Bengaluru. SUDHAKARA JAIN

The minimum temperatures on January 8, recorded at HAL Airport and the KIA were 15.2 °C and 15.0 °C respectively

Lakshmi adds that it is tough, especially during winter, but they have no choice. "If we stop, garbage will pile up on streets, and the city will suffer. I keep telling myself that people rely on us to keep their neighborhoods clean. It is this thought that keeps me moving, even when my hands are frozen, and my back is aching. We Pourakarmikas know how to work through anything... rain, cold, or heat," she said.

Maker of hot 'chai'

A similar story unfolds when you talk to 22-year-old Ramya and her mother who sell tea and coffee on a pushcart at the Sarakki Market, J.P. Nagar, early in the morning.

"We have to start our work early because that's when most of our customers come. By 5 a.m., my mother and I set up our stall here at Sarakki Market. I light the stove to boil the water and milk, and that first bit of warmth from the flame is what keeps me going. My hands shiver while making the tea, but once the work starts, I don't feel the cold as much," she said.

Ramya tells that people working in the market, auto drivers, pourakarmikas, and even IT workers heading to early shifts stop by for a hot cup of tea at her stall.

"They say my tea gives them energy to start their day, and hearing that makes me proud. Standing in one place for hours in this weather is tough. Sometimes, I rub my hands near the stove to warm them, or sip my own tea to fight the cold. This is not an easy life, especially in winter, but the market depends on us, seeing people warm their hands on the tea glasses I serve makes me feel like I am helping them in my own small way," Ramya added.

A small fire

Vendors at the Sarakki Market too said that winter mornings in the market are harsh despite the crowd and moving vehicles. Eeranna reaches Sarakki by 4.30 a.m. with his sacks of onions, and even though he wears a sweater, socks and a cap, it's not enough. "The chill is heavy in the air, especially when the wind blows. To keep myself and the neighbouring vendors warm, I light a small fire in an old tin can, it may not seem like much, but it makes a big difference. I keep it burning next to me and warm my hands over it whenever the cold becomes unbearable. Sometimes, other vendors or even passersby join me for a few moments to feel the heat. It doesn't last the whole morning, so I have to keep adding wood whenever I find some. This goes on at least till 8 a.m., when the weather gets a little warmer," said Eeranna.

Eco Reels - Climate Charche Edition to be held in Bengaluru

The curated films will bring to the fore issues of urban flooding, heat, pollution, waste and more

Preeti Zachariah
BENGALURU

Climate change adds a whole new layer of challenges to an already dysfunctional society, says Manasi Pingle, Coordinator of Bengaluru Sustainability Forum (BSF), a city-based initiative focusing on sustainability. "There are numerous long-standing issues arising from inequity and injustice," says Pingle, who believes that it is, therefore, essential to foreground the impact of climate on already-vulnerable communities and "develop a people's vocabulary to understand and articulate what is happening...maybe talk about it from different angles."

An upcoming film festival, *Eco Reels - Climate Charche Edition*, which is being organised by BSF in collaboration with the Kriti Film Club for the first time in the city, seeks to do precisely this, aiming to spotlight pressing issues of climate crisis, adaptation and mitigation, environmental challenges and people's struggles in this context, scientific and policy debates, across urban and rural landscapes, as the event's release states. "The curated films will bring to the fore issues of urban flooding, heat, pollution, waste and more, as well as rural concerns around water, waste, and other climatic impacts on people and natural resources, as well as innovations, adaptation and mitigation strategies," it adds.

One of the films to be showcased at the festival. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

An important platform

While BSF and Kriti have collaborated on other occasions, this is the first time *Eco Reels* will be held in Bengaluru. According to Pingle, over the past year, BSF has engaged in different events, including lectures, group discussions, and capacity-building workshops under the *Climate Charche* series, "to look at the interconnections between climate and various city systems." She adds that they also wanted to do a film festival because it allowed them to take these critical conversations to a larger audience.

Samayada Harivu (Flow of Time). SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Aanchal Kapur, the founder of the Kriti Film Club, says that films are a very powerful medium as they tell stories and allow people to feel, think about and even act upon the issues they weave in. "Linkages are made through the diverse stories that the films tell." Additionally, *charcha* or discussion has been integral to every film screening at Kriti. "We don't just show a film and leave. We always discuss the film and engage the audience with attending filmmakers, invited experts or social practitioners."

Four venues

Eco Reels - Climate Charche Edition will be held over four days at four venues in the city: Mount Carmel College, JAIN (Deemed-to-be-University) Gandhi Bhavan and CHRIST (Deemed-to-be-University. "One of the things we also wanted to try and do is see how to decentralise so that it is easy for people to go to the place closest to them," says Pingle. Also, "even though it's happening in academic spaces on three of the four days, it's open to the public, and different films are playing on different days."

Some of the films which will be screened include *Samayada Harivu*, set on the banks of the historic Begur Lake; *Bhed Chal*, about the pastoralist kurbā community; *The Weight of Water*, which explores how communities in Nepal are being impacted by flooding and drought and *Gomala: Commons under Threat*, focusing on the government-reserved land in Karnataka used to graze livestock. "What is central to our curation is to bring in the core and the periphery into the public domain and look at the interconnections," says Kapur, who believes that community and community voices are integral to the climate change discourse.

To know more, log into www.bengalurusustainabilityforum.org/eco-reels-climate-charche-edition

FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO JANUARY 9, 1975

Plan to Improve Lot of Tribals

Bangalore: The Karnataka Government is planning in a big way to usher in a new era in the lives of the tribal people scattered mostly in the Western Ghat region of the State.

Though the population of tribes in the State is a little over 2.31 lakhs, according to the 1971 census, which is very small compared to the total population, there are 45 different tribal groups, some with a nomadic character.

There have been attempts in the past to draw them to the mainstream of life but the results have not been very encouraging.

Prominent among the tribal races are the Soliga, Eruliga, Hakkipikka, Kadu Kuruba, Jenu Kuruba, Erava, Malekudiga, Meda, Korega, Aditya, Maratha, Kapala, Hasaluru, Gowdlu, Pardhi, Maleru and Bils. The soligas are found in Mysore, Mandya and Bangalore districts. Eruliga in Mysore and Mandya districts, Hakkipikkas as wandering tribes in Mysore and Bangalore districts and Jenu Kuruba and Kadu Kurubas in Coorg, Mysore, Hassan, Chickmagaluru and Shimoga districts. The eravas are seen in Coorg and Mysore districts.

Most of the tribes, who are forest dwellers, depend on agriculture for their living. Many of them work as agriculture labourers supplementing their income by collecting and selling Forest produce like honey and fuel. They live in a cluster of huts ranging from six to 15 in number. The tribes in Karnataka as in other parts of the country suffer from an inferiority complex born out of lack of understanding and appreciation of their problems, mass illiteracy, indebtedness, exploitation by advanced classes and their own people who have made good by marketing their goods.

GIG GUIDE

New year, new beats

Jazz, Noise and Grime take the city's music scene to a great start this week

Anurag Tagat

Break the Noise Vol.1

January 11, 7:30 pm onwards
Fandom at Gilly's Redefined, Koramangala
Entry: ₹399, via Insider.in, plus ₹500 cover charge at the door

A new gig series starts off 2025 at Fandom at Gilly's Redefined, with Break The Noise's first edition being curated by indie singer-songwriter The Mangas. The lineup this time around features New York-based Indian artiste Shef's Kiss, rock band Rascals of the First Order and singer-songwriter Aamir Rizvi.

Rizvi took to Instagram to talk about the concert, saying, "My first ever show in BLR is all about original music and I'm so excited to be back playing with the Mangas, Shef's Kiss, Matthew Panakal."

A description from the organisers says that Break the Noise is all about "shattering the monotony of typical weekend plans." It goes on to add, "It is a bi-monthly live music event that invites Bangalore's vibrant youth to immerse themselves in raw, electrifying energy."

The curation for future editions will continue to focus on rock and punk bands on every lineup.

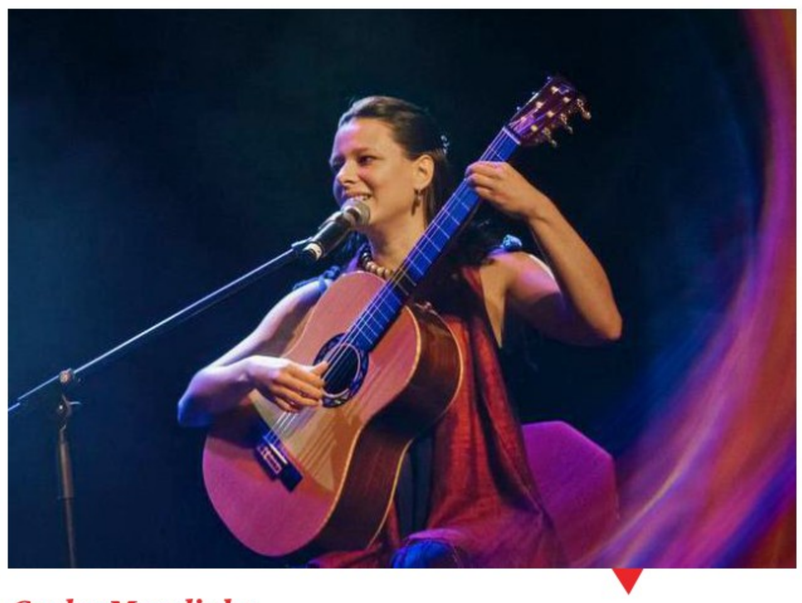
Killa P, MC Solomon and More

January 12, 8 pm onwards
Koramangala Social
Entry: ₹499 via Insider.in

As part of a three-city tour organised by Social Offline and AMNAP (Always Make Noise and Party) Records, UK grime and hip-hop comes to town with seasoned artistes such as Killa P and MC Solomon performing in Bengaluru this week. They will be supported by Indian DJ-producers such as Yung.Raj, Big Trouble aka Tanush Hegde and Ira BB aka Ira Banerjee.

The event description adds, "This is your chance to experience one of the genre's true pioneers live and direct."

Killa P last toured India in early 2024 and is best known for being among the pioneers of the UK grime movement, and part of crews such as Roll Deep and Cemetery Warriors. He released his latest album *Killing Time* in November last year. The event description adds, "Known for anthems like 'Topper Top' and collaborations with grime heavyweights such as Skepta, Killa P's unique flow and unmatched stage presence are guaranteed to light up Bengaluru."



Cacha Mundinho

January 12, 5:45 pm onwards
The Blue Room, Jayanagar
Entry: ₹750, via Skillboxes.com

The globe-trotting band Cacha Mundinho (which translates into "catch a small world" from Portuguese) are making their way to Bengaluru for an intimate, collaborative set at The Blue Room this week.

Known for drawing from Portuguese and Iberian music traditions, Cacha Mundinho travels via North Africa and the Middle East to India and Brazil. The band is led by Joana Almeida, regarded as one of the first female, classical fado guitarists in Portugal. An event description states, "She composes original pieces in Portuguese, inspired by fado and traditional Portuguese troubadour songs but with her own unique and contemporary take on tradition. Elements from Portugal, Middle East, Africa, Brazil and Indian music are combined with the improvisatory agility of top-notch jazz."

The Amsterdam-based act also brings in percussionist Sjahin During, Maripepa Contreras on oboe/duduk, and Pedro Ivo Ferreira on double bass. In India, however, Cacha Mundinho's Joana and Sjahin will collaborate with Amith Nadig on Carnatic flute, and Aman Mahajan on piano, "for a special crossover experience of their music," the description states.

Ranj x Clifr, Yatharth Bakshi

January 11, 7 pm onwards
Pizza Express, Koramangala
Entry: Free, RSVP via Skillboxes.com

The ongoing Songwriter Sessions at Pizza Express marches on into the new year as well, this time bringing a diverse lineup. Hip-hop, pop and R&B-informed duo Ranj x Clifr will be performing alongside singer-songwriter Yatharth Bakshi. Talking about the intimate show, organisers Brave Cave say, "We want to feature songwriters across genres, languages and any other division to highlight the art of storytelling through music."

Ranj aka Ranjani Ramadoss posted an update for her fans in Bengaluru on Instagram saying, "Playing one last, cosy acoustic set before we move." The duo – who recently toured the country with Shillong artist Meba Ofilia, also put out an EP titled *Play Me!* in September last year. Bakshi, for his part, released his last EP *In Mirrors* in 2023.

CITYBEATS

Taste of til

ONGOING
Naturals Ice Cream has launched the tilgul flavour as part of Makar Sankranti celebrations. This flavour, launched on January 4, will be available for 25 days. The ice cream is a take on the classic tilgul sweets, a staple during the festival and is made from sesame seeds, jaggery and is topped with nuts and cardamom powder. *Available pan-India at Naturals Stores.*

Stories and weaves

JANUARY 12
Weaving A Story is a curative exploration of Sambalpuri saris explained through stories by Aparna Jaishankar with sari connoisseur Sahana Das. Discover the symbolic significance of the colours and motifs used as well undertand how each sari tells a story of devotion. Tickets priced at ₹399 are available at the venue.
At 6.30pm, Atta Galatta. Call 9632510126.

Just for children

JANUARY 11
Story Frames: Unlocking the Power of Visual Interpretation, is a 75-minute interactive workshop for children aged between eight and 13. Organised by SkilLit Readers, it will help one interprete fiction through visuals, besides delving into characters, themes, emotions and plots.
At 11am, Atta Galatta. Tickets at ₹500 are available at the venue. Call 9632510126.

Mother Earth's daughters

Ragi Kana, a cultural hub in Bengaluru, is organising the Mahila Raitha Sankranti, which is a celebration of women farmers and the harvest festival.

This year, the focus will be on honouring women farmers, the unsung heroes of Indian agriculture, with a day packed with festivities, fresh produce and rural crafts.

The event will see women farmers from across the State, bringing together their produce. Visitors will get a chance to interact with some of the women farmers including Rajamma (from Tondahalli village in Mulabagilu) known for her expertise in native seeds, Thimmakka (a master of greens, who will share the traditional village method of identifying, collecting, and cooking a mix of greens to create nutrient-rich meals) and Sharadamma (from Kandugallu village, an expert in millet and pulse cultivation, processing, and preservation).

Busy bees Harvest specials are the Santhe's highlight. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Most of them are also masters in preserving soil fertility and maximising water retention, showcasing methods that are environmentally sustainable and effective.

There will also be traditional Sankranti goodies such as yellu-bella, sihi and khara pongal, an exhibition of greens and seeds with a range of handlooms, organic produce, handicrafts, and homemade products made from togari, avarekai, groundnuts, sugarcane, turmeric roots, ragi, navane rice and more.

The Santhe will be held on January 12, between 10am and 5pm at Ragi Kana, Gottigere, Off Bannerghatta Road. Call 9972676426 for details.

Intelligence and inclusivity

Praveen Sudevan

For children with disabilities, opportunities to showcase their knowledge are few and far between. That is where Quizabled steps in. Launched in 2016 by Seva-in-Action (SiA) with support from the LTIMindtree Foundation, this unique quizzing event attempts to change the prevailing perceptions about children with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

"Especially when it comes to children with intellectual disabilities, they don't have platforms like this," says Ruma Banerjee, Vice Chairperson of SiA. "There's a myth in society that they lack the aptitude to participate in such events. Quizabled is about breaking that myth and creating opportunities."

From its humble beginnings with just 100 participants in Bengaluru, Quizabled has grown into a nationwide initiative. This year, its 10th edition spans 12 States featuring over 4,000 students, culminating in the national finals on January 11 at BMCE College of Engineering in Bengaluru.

Shining bright Glimpses from previous Quisabled events held in India. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Shattering stereotypes

The program is not just about answering questions; it is about reshaping how society views children with disabilities. "The idea was to develop knowledge and showcase their abilities," Ruma explains, "People often think these children should only be in special schools or workshops. But until we give them opportunities, how will we truly know what they're capable of?"

Quizabled's quizzes are thoughtfully designed, incorporating multi-sensory formats such as video, audio, and pictorial questions. "We worked with special educators and quizzing professionals to curate questions that align with the children's intellectual abilities," she adds. "It's not about their disabilities but their abilities."

The quizzes also embrace regional diversity, with questions conducted in local languages such as Telugu, Bengali, and Oriya. This inclusive approach ensures more children feel comfortable and engaged.

This year, Quizabled introduced a hybrid model to include more rural and tribal communities. "We've reached nearly 4,000 children this year, compared to just 100 in our first edition," says Ruma. Preliminaries were held online and offline, with zonal finals conducted in Gujarat, Delhi, and Tamil Nadu. The top finalists from these zones will compete in Bengaluru for the national title.

The program's impact extends beyond the children. "When we started, convincing teachers and parents was a challenge. Many doubted if these children could participate," recalls Ruma. "But once they saw the kids answering questions on stage, attitudes changed. Today, schools are incorporating quizzes into their activities."

A decade of impact

Marking its 10th year, Quizabled is also evolving. It recently became a registered entity, the Quizabled Foundation, to sustain its mission and expand its reach. Plans are underway to extend the program to underserved States like Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand and even to South Asia in the coming years.

This year, a pilot science exhibition was added to the program. "We've selected 12 projects from schools in southern States that showcase innovative ways to teach science and technology," says Ruma. "It's not just about quizzing any more. We're also focusing on building teachers' capacities to create better learning opportunities."

The event's true success lies in the confidence and sense of achievement it instils in participants. "These children look forward to it every year," she adds, "For many, just stepping on stage is a big accomplishment. It's not just a quiz; it's a celebration of their potential."

‘Centre yet to wake up from slumber on Dam Safety Act’

SC was hearing plea seeking lowering of the permissible water level at Mullaperiyar dam; it says Centre hasn’t fully implemented 2021 law to stop disasters related to dams, ensuring their safety

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

Safety check: Supreme Court-appointed monitoring committee members inspect Mullaperiyar dam in Kerala, on June 13, 2024.

The Supreme Court on Wednesday orally said the Centre was yet to wake up from its ‘slumber’ and fully implement a five-year-old law to prevent disasters related to dams and ensure their safe functioning.

A three-judge Bench headed by Justice Surya Kant said the Dam Safety Act, 2021, was “existing on paper” after Kerala argued that “nothing has been done”, including the constitution of a National Committee on Dam Safety. “Despite Parliament having passed this Act, we are aghast that the Executive is yet to wake up from its slumber,” Justice Dipankar Datta remarked.

The court was hearing a petition filed by advocate-petitioner Mathews Nedumpara, who submitted that a breach at the 129-year-old Mullaperiyar dam may lead to the deaths of lakhs of people spread across five townships. He sought a lowering of the permissible water level at dam from 142 ft to 120 ft.

Section 5 of the 2021 Act mandates the constitution of the National Committee on Dam Safety within 60 days of the commencement of the Act.

“Nothing has been done in the years between 2021 and 2025,” senior advocate Jaideep Gupta, appearing for Kerala, claimed.

However, Tamil Nadu said that the National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA) was formed under the Act. He referred to an office memorandum issued by the Centre on November 21 last year notifying the formation of a “new supervisory committee”.

But Justice Kant reacted that there was no provision for a “supervisory committee” in the 2021 Act. The court wondered how the NDSA was formed even before the constitution of the National Committee.

Bengaluru overtakes Chennai as top city for women: Study

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Bengaluru surpassed Chennai as India’s top city for women in the third edition of ‘Top Cities for Women in India 2024’ (TCWI) report released by The Avtar Group, a workplace culture consulting firm.

The TCWI index identifies role model cities and best practices, and provides a framework for organizations, policymakers and individuals to foster well-rounded development in our cities, which is a pivotal driver of women’s progress nationwide, according to Avtar.

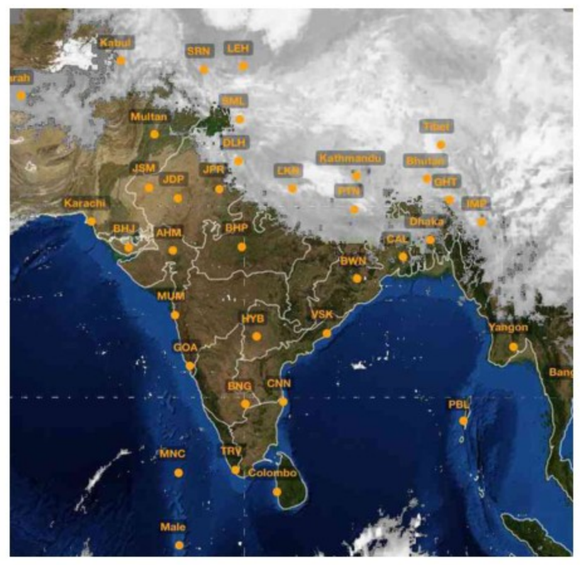
The index has been compiled by assimilating various data sources including the Centre for Monitoring the Indian Economy (CMIE), the World Bank, crime records and Periodic Labour Force Survey, along with Avtar’s primary research. A nation-wide survey that was conducted from February 2024 to November 2024 in which 1672 women from 60 cities participated. 120 cities across India were considered for the study.

Bengaluru moved up from the second spot in the TCWI ranking last year (2023) to become the number 1 city for women in India in 2024. Bengaluru was followed by Chennai, Mumbai, Hyderabad and Pune.

The cities are ranked based on an overall ‘City Inclusion Score’ assigned to every city.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)

Forecast for Thursday: Cold wave conditions likely in isolated pockets of Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, Gilgit-Baltistan, Himachal Pradesh and Punjab. Dense/very dense fog conditions likely in some/isolated parts of Chandigarh, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Odisha and Madhya Pradesh

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	19.6	15.8	Kozhikode	—	33.5	23.8
Ahmedabad	—	25.6	12.1	Kurnool	—	31.7	17.2
Aizawl	—	24.4	11.4	Lucknow	—	17.1	10.6
Allahabad	—	19.2	11.1	Madurai	—	31.0	22.0
Bengaluru	—	28.7	16.4	Mangaluru	—	32.7	21.7
Bhopal	—	22.4	3.6	Mumbai	—	33.1	19.0
Bhubaneswar	—	28.4	15.3	Mysuru	—	29.1	14.6
Chandigarh	—	18.8	9.2	New Delhi	—	21.5	7.4
Chennai	—	29.1	21.0	Patna	—	16.3	13.8
Coimbatore	—	31.0	21.4	Port Blair	6	29.5	24.1
Dehradun	—	18.9	8.2	Puducherry	—	28.8	21.2
Gangtok	15	14.3	5.0	Pune	—	31.5	16.9
Goa	—	34.0	22.0	Raipur	—	27.3	10.4
Guwahati	3	19.0	14.7	Ranchi	—	21.6	8.8
Hubballi	—	31.0	15.0	Shillong	—	15.6	6.4
Hyderabad	—	28.6	15.1	Shimla	—	16.7	5.9
Imphal	1	19.0	11.1	Srinagar	—	8.5	-1.0
Jaipur	—	23.0	6.4	Thiruvananthapuram	—	33.2	22.8
Kochi	—	30.8	23.8	Tiruchi	—	29.6	21.6
Kohima	—	19.6	4.8	Vijayawada	—	29.5	17.8
Kolkata	—	23.0	16.4	Visakhapatnam	—	29.6	20.4

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.31	..77	..9	... 167	...153	
Bengaluru	.14	..38	27	... 149	...104	
Chennai	.10	..30	29	... 143	...101	
Delhi	.27	..94	88	... 334	...257	
Hyderabad	...6	106	24	... 160	...150	
Kolkata	.12	..56	23	... 191	...140	
Lucknow	...5	..36	54	... 216	...197	
Mumbai	.15	..24	29	... 262	...145	
Pune	..—	236	86	... 141	...118	
Visakhapatnam	.12	..89	40	... 266	...195	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Byrnihat, Assam recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 310 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu recorded a healthy AQI score of 29

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Businessman arrested on actor’s complaint in Kerala

The Hindu Bureau
KOCHI

Boby Chemmanur

The Kochi City police on Wednesday evening arrested businessman Boby Chemmanur on a complaint lodged by a woman actor with the Ernakulam Central police.

The arrest came within 24 hours after the actor lodged the complaint on Tuesday evening. He was taken into custody from outside his farmhouse in Wayanad on Wednesday around 10 a.m. and was brought to the Central station around 7 p.m.

The police have booked him under non-bailable charges and will produce him before the magistrate on Thursday.

The actor, in her complaint, accused him of repeatedly making sexually loaded comments about her on social media and also in person while attending an inaugural function. She had also given the police digital evidence to prove her accusations. She had personally spoken to Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan demanding action.

Shortly after he was taken into custody, the actor took to social media to thank the Chief Minister and the Kerala Police.

HC says commenting on woman’s body is sexual harassment

The Hindu Bureau
KOCHI

The Kerala High Court has held that comments by a man on a woman’s body constitute a sexually coloured remark and that amount to an offence of sexual harassment.

Petition dismissed

Justice A. Badharudeen made the observation recently while dismissing a petition by a former employee of the Kerala State Electricity Board (KSEB) in Aluva seeking to quash a case registered against him under Sections 354A (sexual harassment) and 509 (insulting modesty of a woman) of the Indian Penal Code and Section 120(o) of the Kerala Police Act (causing nuisance through any means of communication by undesirable call, letter, writing, message) on the complaint of a woman employee.

Since 2013

She had alleged that he had been sexually harassing her since 2013 and had used vulgar language against her in 2013 and sent objectionable messages and voice calls.

The petitioner, in his petition, said mere reference that a person had a nice body structure did not amount to sexually coloured remarks as contemplated under Section 354A (1)(iv) of the IPC.

The court observed that the prosecution had specifically made out a *prima facie* case to attract the offences alleged against him.

INBRIEF

Makaravilakku preparations in full swing at Sabarimala

With only a few days remaining for the Makaravilakku festival, preparations are in full swing at Sabarimala to ensure its smooth conduct. The festival will be celebrated on January 14. Pathanamthitta Collector S. Premkrishnan on Wednesday inspected key Makaravilakku viewing points, including Laha Sathram, Panjipara, Ilavungal, Ayyanmala, Nellimala, Attamoth West, Attamoth East, and Pampa Hilltop. Efforts are under way to provide drinking water, toilet facilities, and adequate street lighting in coordination with local bodies.

Senior IAS officer appears before ACB in Formula E case

Senior IAS officer Arvind Kumar, former special chief secretary to Municipal Administration and Urban Development (MAUD), appeared before the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) headquarters in Banjara Hills, Hyderabad, on Wednesday for quizzing in connection with alleged financial irregularities during the Hyderabad Formula E race in February 2023. Meanwhile, former chief engineer of Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority, B.L.N. Reddy, appeared before the Enforcement Directorate over the case registered by the agency.

HC suspends CPI(M) activists’ sentence in Periye murder

A Division Bench of the Kerala High Court on Wednesday suspended the sentence of five years’ simple imprisonment given to CPI(M) leader K.V. Kunhiraman and three others by the Ernakulam CBI Special Court for murdering Youth Congress activists Sarath Lal P.K. and Kripesh at Periye in Kasaragod in 2019. The court ordered the suspension by executing a bond for ₹50,000 each with two solvent sureties each for the like sum to the satisfaction of the jurisdictional court and on condition that they shall deposit the fine of ₹10,000 each awarded by the CBI court.

Cool home

Weaver’s web: A spider web glistening with dewdrops on a misty morning at the Hesaraghatta meadows in Bengaluru as the city witnesses a drop in temperature on Wednesday. K. MURALI KUMAR

T.N. Speaker flays Ravi’s remarks

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Speaker M. Appavu on Wednesday said the Assembly condemned Governor R.N. Ravi over his social media post criticising the proceedings of the House. The House condemned the Governor’s actions that insulted the people of Tamil Nadu and their elected representatives, he said.

“As per Article 176 (1) of the Constitution, his democratic duty is only to read out the speech drafted by the Cabinet. He has no right to demand that the national anthem be sung at the beginning. The Governor should follow the law, and it is not appropriate for him to make demands,” the Speaker said.

Taking strong exception to the Raj Bhavan’s post claiming that there was “total censorship” of the House proceedings, reminiscent of the days of the Emergency, the Speaker implied that Doordarshan Podhigai (a part of Prasar Bharati, a State-owned public broadcaster under the Union government) was unable to broadcast the event the way the Governor wanted it to be broadcast – by making edits, if necessary – and hence, the Raj Bhavan had made such comments.

On the day of the Governor’s address, cameras from Doordarshan Podhigai trespassed into the Assembly premises a few minutes ahead of the Governor’s entry, and attempted to record the proceedings, the Speaker said.

Prasar Bharati has not been accepting the request of the Tamil Nadu Assembly for covering the proceedings, Mr. Appavu said.

British changed place names to destroy the Telugu culture: Naidu

The Hindu Bureau
RAJAMAHENDRAVARAM

M. Venkaiah Naidu

Former Vice-President M. Venkaiah Naidu said on Wednesday that the British had changed the names of many places to destroy the Telugu culture.

He inaugurated the two-day Prapancha Telugu Mahasabhalu at Godavari Institute of Engineering and Technology (GIET) here.

Addressing the gathering, he said, “In the future, Rajamahendravaram should not be called as Rajahmundry as insisted by the British. We should prioritise our language by calling it Rajamahendravaram”.

He advocated that people of the Telugu States should not vote for the candidates who don’t speak the language in elections.

A.P. set to hold 3-day Flamingo Festival

The Hindu Bureau
TIRUPATI

Winged visitors: A similar flamingo festival was conducted at Sullurpeta in 2020. NAGARA GOPAL

The much-awaited ‘Flamingo Festival 2025’ is all set to be conducted at Sullurpeta in Tirupati district of Andhra Pradesh from January 18 to 20.

Expectations are high among nature lovers and birdwatchers as the fest was last conducted in 2020. Over 200 varieties of birds are expected to fly to this region during this season. Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu has already informed the district administration to conduct the event on the lines of a State festival.

The three-day event will be spread across five locations including Nelapattu, B.V. Palem, Atakanithippa, Sri City and Sullurpeta. According to Tirupati district Collector S. Venkateswar, a three-day session will be conducted on eco-friendly biodiversity at Sri City, bird watching spots at Nelapattu and Atakanithippa, and boating facility at B.V. Palem as a tourist attraction.

Stalls will be set up at the Government Junior College campus at Sullurpeta, where cultural programmes will be conducted. The government has developed infrastructure facilities by integrating it with Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme.

Local residents will be prioritised at the festival, Mr. Venkateswar asserted, hinting that the problems faced by the residents of the eco-sensitive zone will be addressed, within the purview of the law.

While inspecting the site along with Sullurpeta MLA Nelavala Vijayasri, Regional Director (Tourism) Ramana Prasad, DFO (Wildlife) Radhika and District Tourism Officer Janardhan Reddy on Tuesday, he directed the officials to make the event a successful one.

Growth chill

The economy's sputtering engines necessitate urgent fiscal actions

The National Statistics Office (NSO) has confirmed emerging fears about the economy's evidently sluggish trajectory through this year in its first Gross Domestic Product (GDP) estimates for 2024-25. While the election-focused first quarter hit public capital spending, the second quarter (Q2) was marred by weak demand and still underwhelming public capex, dragging GDP growth to a seven-quarter low of 5.4%. The Centre and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), which were projecting that India would log a fourth year of 7%-plus growth, had pared their hopes to 'about 6.5%' and 6.6%, respectively. This was predicated on a bump-up of about 7% in the second half of the year to offset the first half's 6% rise. The NSO, slightly less sanguine, expects GDP to grow at a four-year low pace of 6.4%, from 8.2% in 2023-24, with just agriculture seen rising significantly faster than last year. Manufacturing and mining growth may virtually halve, and though services sectors seem relatively better off, there is some concern of momentum loss. Purchasing Managers' Indices averaged lower than Q2 through Q3, for both manufacturing and services. The NSO expects private consumption to rebound 7.3% this year from just 4% last year. But Q3 trends do not indicate a significant lift-off in urban demand. So, this could be a tad optimistic despite inflation easing slightly since October.

The Finance Ministry has sought to link the demand slowdown to a "combination of monetary policy stance and macroprudential measures by the central bank". Slow wage growth has also been blamed for cramped household demand. The NSO's projection of gross fixed capital formation growth slipping to 6.4% this year from 9% in 2023-24 indicates that private capex – that is contingent on domestic and global demand – remains weak while public capex goals are unlikely to be met. Of course, these early NSO projections are largely conjured up for informing the Union Budget formulation, and some upgrades may happen later, but most economists see significant downside risks for now. Nomura economists, for instance, who have been arguing that India is in the grip of a cyclical slowdown for a while, reckon growth will end up around 6%, implying a flat-lined second half. With the global outlook also shrouded in uncertainty, winter seems to be here for India's economy. How far behind spring lags will depend on policymakers' actions, and inactions. The Union Budget 2025-26 needs to move from incremental tinkering to tailoring reforms and fiscal actions that can bring India's growth back to the 7% mark, if not 8%, at the earliest. If that entails some hard calls such as slashing income, fuel and consumption taxes, along with import tariffs, so be it. Just pining for interest rate cuts will not suffice anymore.

Cripple and scuttle

Governments are discouraging the exercise of the right to information

Nearly two decades after the passage of the Right to Information Act, it is quite apparent that governments, at least sections of it, are uncomfortable with the idea of transparency and empowerment associated with it. Amendments to dilute its efficacy and attempts to defeat it by delaying or denying information have been quite common for years. Another way to scuttle the law is to cripple the functioning of information commissions at the central and State levels. The issue has surfaced again, with the Supreme Court of India questioning the large number of vacancies in the central and some State Information Commissions. These commissions hear appeals from members of the public who have been denied access to information or have failed to elicit a response from designated information officers in various departments and institutions. A Division Bench has taken note of the fact that there are eight vacancies in the posts of Information Commissioners in the Central Information Commission (CIC), while 23,000 appeals are pending before it. In fact, some State-level Information Commissions are almost defunct for want of members to hear the public. Any court is bound to ask, as the Court has now done, how an institution can be of any use if it does not have persons to perform the required duties under the law.

The Court has sought to impart some urgency to the matter by directing the Department of Personnel and Training to spell out in two weeks the timelines for completing the selection process and notifying the appointments of the eight Information Commissioners in the CIC. It has also asked for details about the search committee and the list of applicants for the posts. Similarly, States that have initiated the appointment process but without any definite timeline have been asked to complete the process within a specified time. However, this may not be enough to bring about a revival in the fulfilment of the original purpose of the Act. Besides filling up vacancies, not all governments have complied with a Court verdict of 2019 that called for proactive efforts to fill up vacancies in time by advertising them early. The CIC's post was stripped of its autonomy some years ago when the government removed the fixed five-year tenure and made it open-ended. Not much has been done to appoint candidates from various walks of life, as retired civil servants continue to be chosen, a point noted by the Bench in the latest hearing. It is inevitable that a large number of vacancies will result in a huge backlog and ultimately discourage the people from seeking information. It is difficult not to conclude that this is what those in power want.

River interlinking, the fount of environmental disaster

On December 25, 2024, Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone for the Ken-Betwa River Link Project, which aims to solve the water scarcity in the Bundelkhand region that covers parts of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. The project also includes the construction of a dam located within the Panna Tiger Reserve, raising concerns about its submergence. Upon completion, this project will link the supposed water surplus Ken river with the Betwa in drought-stricken Bundelkhand – an area that had 58% forest cover in 1938.

C.P. Rajendran

Adjunct Professor at the National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bengaluru, and an author of the book, 'The Rumbling Earth — The Story of Indian Earthquakes'

A misplaced model

This project, which costs around ₹45,000 crore, was launched despite the objections raised by experts, including members of an empowered committee appointed by the Supreme Court of India, and by circumventing the law that has strict terms for allowing hydroelectric power projects. Models of grandiose technological fixes as the solution to all water-related problems have gathered momentum. Politicians are now touting the concept of river interlinking for inter-basin water transfers as a geoengineering solution to continued water depletion in India.

The concept of inter-basin transfer was proposed 130 years ago by Sir Arthur Cotton, who designed irrigation dams in the Godavari and Krishna river valleys. M. Visvesvaraya, an early icon among Indian engineers, further refined this idea. K.L. Rao and Captain Dinshaw J. Dastur subsequently expanded the scope of this concept in 1970 and 1980. Initially termed the 'National Water Grid', this concept re-emerged as the 'River-Interlinking Project' (ILR) from the Ministry of Water Resources to transfer surplus waters from the Ganga and the Brahmaputra to water-deficient regions in central and southern India.

Following this, the National Water Development Agency (NWDA) was established in 1982 to conduct surveys and investigations, and to prepare feasibility reports for links under the National Perspective Plan. The NWDA identified 30 links for feasibility studies, divided into 14 Himalayan and 16 Peninsular river links. These links are anticipated to alleviate the impacts of floods and droughts, boost income in rural areas, and address water distress in agriculture.

The currently estimated cost of ₹5.5 lakh crore does not include the social, environmental and operational costs. Ultimately, all this will end up as taxes on the common man. This lofty idea of interlinking the rivers, to connect surplus rivers of the country with the deficient rivers is fundamentally flawed as it overlooks the huge environmental costs and the eventual deaths of the rivers and deltaic regions.

> The political class must note that the lofty idea of interlinking rivers overlooks the huge environmental costs and the eventual deaths of rivers and deltaic regions

The uncontrolled human-induced disequilibrium in natural hydrographic systems will destroy associated ecological niches with incalculable repercussions for the long-term well-being of society – an unpardonable disservice to future generations. We may also have to factor in the consequences of climate change impacting rainfall and river flow, which will aggravate the situation. It is unclear how the nation's declared commitment to mitigating human-induced climate change and river manipulation go hand in hand.

The eco-services of rivers

Policymakers ignore the point that there is no "free" surplus water in any river and simple elementary arithmetic rationalisations such as tapping the 'water lost to sea' do not consider the eco-hydrological dimensions of the issue. The supporters of these projects and the politicians do not understand or deliberately ignore viewing the river as a part of the drainage basin with constitutive ecological niches, which includes its final destination of deltaic plains, interfacing with the sea.

The eco-services of the free-flowing rivers include the flushing of silt from riverbeds to the coastal waters to form deltas. Flood water is not to be rationalised as 'surplus'. It needs to be seen as the carrier of minerals for land fertility, groundwater recharge and sustenance of biodiversity, which finally helps the livelihood of millions of marginalised people.

By diverting river water, deltaic regions are starved of water that could have helped balance saltwater from the sea. Now, however, the deltaic ecosystem will suffer from the change. The Indus Delta offers a crucial lesson. Alice Albinia, in her book, *Empires of the Indus: The Story of a River* (2008), narrates how a delta system at the mouth of the Indus – which was once "the richest in all Pakistan" – became impoverished when the British started barrage construction, which Pakistan continued after 1947.

Such examples are aplenty in India as well. The state of the downstream parts of the Narmada since the completion of the Sardar Sarovar dam is a modern example in the making.

The global examples of river channelisation have also proved to be major disasters. The channelisation of the Kissimmee river in the State of Florida, authorised by the U.S. Congress in 1954 to mitigate flooding, is an environmental disaster, resulting in the loss of wetlands. Massive resources are being spent to revive its original configuration. The current state of the Aral Sea – one of the world's largest lakes – is another example of how geoengineering projects destroy natural systems. The lake has now become a howling desert after the rivers that sustained it were diverted by irrigation projects implemented during the heady days of the Soviet Union.

The real reasons for India's water crisis

India's water crisis is spiralling out of control, primarily due to inadequate water management, poor environmental practices, law ambiguity, and corruption. A national water policy should embrace a holistic approach to watershed management, involving local citizens in monitoring the hydrological cycle and working alongside hydrologists, engineers, and biologists. The policy must incorporate effective aquifer management through the regulation of water usage. Farmers should be engaged to help devise strategies for efficient irrigation water usage. The government has limited control over wastewater management and should create innovative reuse programmes. A comprehensive study involving interdisciplinary expertise on river basins is essential before initiating significant water transfer projects.

In the book, *Let There Be Water: Israel's Solution for a Water-Starved World,* Seth M. Siegel notes that Israel's drip irrigation programmes save 25%-75% of pumped water. Israel's success story in water resource management lies in modernising irrigation techniques. This also compels farmers to use less water, fertilisers and pesticides, maintaining aquifer health at an optimum level. Along with such interventions, we must incorporate elements of vernacular practices in watershed management strategies.

Despite the current ruling regime's emphasis on 'Hindutva' and embedded Hindu belief system that extols the deityship of Indian rivers, the river interlinking project stands out as a stark contrast to such an ideology. Manipulated by dams that are in excess, mauled by human and industrial waste, and commodified for religious marketing, India's rivers are under existential threat. Who will save them?

The right to food and the struggle with the PDS

In 2023, there was a report discussing the right to food in the context of Jharkhand. Similarly, a few days ago, there was another report that was in the context of Odisha. These reports highlighted something alarming – that a substantial number of households have been removed from the rolls of the Public Distribution System (PDS). This disturbing situation is not limited to Jharkhand and Odisha. Bihar, another State in the east-central region, has its own PDS tragedy.

Ananye Krishna

Field Researcher at the DEVISE Charitable Trust

Shailendra Kumar

Field Researcher at the DEVISE Charitable Trust

The example of the Musahar community

Bihar was blighted by a supply crisis, when rations were needed the most, at the time of the COVID-19 pandemic. Since then, there are communities which continue to be in want of a stable supply of ration. This is more notable among extremely marginalised communities such as the Musahars. This is a community that has been pushed beyond the edge of destitution by the socio-politics of caste. Its struggle with the PDS emerges as a significant symptom of the same.

A number of Musahar households in Patna district do not have an active ration card. Even if they do have one, there is another problem – the card does not have the names of all the family members.

There are also several people who have lost access to their monthly supply of ration ever since biometric verification was made mandatory at fair price shops (FPS). In such cases, the individuals concerned are forced to get a new ration card as after verification it emerges that their names have been struck off the PDS rolls. The ruling dispensation and its over the top marketing of 'smart cities' clearly posits before us the disconnect between the government and the people most in need of state welfare.

> Bureaucratic hurdles are a reason why a substantial number of households have found themselves removed from PDS rolls in parts of north, central and east India

Problems with the PDS are not limited to enrolment and access. There is also the flow of corruption through the veins of the system. Households enrolled with the PDS have reported that FPS dealers have been releasing only four kilograms of food grain/person when a below poverty line (BPL) household which has a Priority Household (PHH) ration card is entitled to five kilograms a person. The four kilograms of grain being issued is rice, which is the lowest quality of 'Usna' rice. No amount of wheat is issued.

Documentation that has no legal basis

Coming back to the issue of enrolment in PDS. The Government of Bihar offers its citizens the option to file a ration card application using a paper-based application form or by filling in an online application form through its e-PDS portal. The first option requires the Aadhaar details of the applicant and their family members. The second option requires an extra set of documents, namely caste certificate, income certificate, and residence certificate. Even when the applicant uses the first method, the officials eventually demand these certificates.

The demand for such documents is not exclusive to Bihar. Jharkhand also makes such a demand while Uttar Pradesh makes it mandatory to provide an income certificate, and Madhya Pradesh requires the submission of proof of residence.

The requirements of these certificates do not have any legal basis. Neither the National Food Security Act (NFSA) of 2013 nor the PDS control order of 2015 explicate the requirement of such documents. An officer from the Food and Consumer Protection Department in Bihar has confirmed that the requirement of those certificates is an oversight in the online system. Here again we see that in the race towards digitisation and e-governance, governments have shed all and any conception of governance and citizen welfare.

The issue of exploitation

It is notable, and most unfortunate, that the government, which has complete awareness of its systemic flaws, has made no attempt at systemic change and that people continue to be crushed under the weight of official indifference. To make matters worse, this hubris of power has provided the perfect conditions for the creation of a market of exploitation.

Most of the people, especially in the Musahar community, who seek to avail the benefits of PDS, neither have the resources nor the knowledge to interact with online processes. This situation has been aggressively exploited by middlemen who charge a sum that is north of ₹3,000 to have a ration card made. Within this market of exploitation, it is not uncommon to hear that neither document was issued nor the middleman traceable after payment.

Amidst the myriad challenges, if the people are somehow able to file their application, there is still no guarantee that they will get their ration card. While the 2015 order states that ration card should be issued within 30 days of the application being filled, there are cases of people whose applications have been pending for long – between four to 18 months. These applications are not for an entitlement which goes above and beyond the diurnal needs of a person. They are for the basic means of subsistence. It has been 24 years since the right to food was recognised as a fundamental right in the case, *People's Union of Civil Liberties vs Union of India*. Since then, governments have wound bureaucratic red tape around it so tightly that it is choking the very people it was meant for.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Role of the Governor

The episode of the Governor of Tamil Nadu, R.N. Ravi, walking out of the Legislative Assembly is unheard of. His excellency is bound under Article 176 to address the House. Article 163 makes it clear that he is bound to act on the aid and the advice of the Council of Ministers and not walk out, which is in violation of his constitutional duty.

It is not as if the State Government refused to have the National Anthem being played.

All that was said was that the State anthem would come first and that the National Anthem would be sung after his address thereby giving primacy to the State and federal structures. This has been the convention too.

The Governor has been making it difficult for the elected representatives to run the State. His excellency walked out of the State Assembly. It is time he walks out of the State too.

N.G.R. Prasad,
Chennai

Once again, the Tamil Nadu Governor has demeaned himself by walking out of the Assembly. The practice of the *Tamil Thai Vaazhththu* being played before the National Anthem is well known to his excellency.

Tharcius S. Fernando,
Chennai

Ban plastic flags

It is usually observed that after Independence Day and the Republic Day celebrations are over, miniature plastic flags are seen strewn all over. There is an urgent need to ban plastic flags. School students, especially NCC cadets, girl guides and boy scouts and other students should be assigned the task of disposal in an appropriate manner. There is a need for schools to teach students the dignity behind our national flag.

Cajetan Peter D'souza,
Mumbai

Roads in Chennai

The need of the hour in Chennai ("Chennai Corporation plans to float tenders for over 5,000 road works for upcoming year in Jan.", December 22) is to impose a ban on the laying of roads in all areas that are prone to flooding. The prime cause of flooding is repeated and unnecessary road-laying. The ease of mechanised road-laying and other factors are what have motivated the Greater Chennai Corporation to go on a road-laying spree. Once roads are 'brought down' to the level prior to the year 2000, miracles would happen. Roads will once again become the major channels to carry rainwater to the nearest canal. It is illogical and impractical to assume that every drop of rain must be drained through storm water drains.

Sujatha Vijayaraghavan,
Chennai

The state of Indian cricket

I am one of countless cricket-crazy fans in India for whom playing the game is as important as how the sport is administered and run. The last few series have been very tough for the players, and we, as keen followers, have endured the adrenaline highs and dismal lows of Team India's journey. It does raise a few pertinent questions about the BCCI's approach, since it is the apex body that shapes Indian cricket. As the dust of the defeat in Australia settles, it raises a few points about how the whole Test panned out. Our obsession with stardom and superstar status sounds clichéd, but past records and performances in other formats do take precedence over the purest form — Test cricket. No one can deny that the team management — read selectors — has to take a tough call to ensure that the team composition is spot on and adequate work-load balance gains precedence over the bloated egos of the people who call the shots.

Sunil Gadepalli,
Pune

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the postal address.

China's long game in Africa

In 2022, when China established its first political training school in Tanzania, the Mwalimu Julius Nyerere Leadership School, its motivation was unambiguous. With an estimated cost of $40 million, the school was a tool for the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to shape the future political leaders of Africa following the Chinese principles of governance.

Therefore, it is no surprise that the 120 official members of the school's first cohort were from countries with long-standing historical ties to China. These countries continue to be ruled by the liberation parties that came into power through their pre-independence struggles. The countries include South Africa, Mozambique, Angola, Namibia, Zimbabwe, and Tanzania. In fact, these six countries, along with Botswana, are also part of the Former Liberation Movements of Southern Africa, an informal coalition meant to help one another address governance challenges and stay in power.

Clearly, the move by China to establish the political school is meant to strengthen its relationship and increase its influence among the policymakers of these countries. The political school is another platform for the leaders of these ruling liberation parties to enhance their governance capabilities through shared educational resources. This is also an example of China's broader strategy to shape Africa's political landscape by promoting its governance model based on the centrality of the ruling party and its control over the state.

Samir Bhattacharya

Associate Fellow at the Observer Research Foundation

Game of influence

There are several ways for a country to assert its influence. One way could be mediation or fostering dialogue among the concerned parties to facilitate positive conversations. This also helps in building a strong global image for the mediator country. Historically, the U.S. has been the most influential international mediator. However, China is increasingly asserting itself in this role, as seen in its involvement in resolving the Saudi Arabia-Iran and Niger-Benin disputes.

As China seeks to establish an alternative world order – often complementary to, and sometimes in contrast with, the Western-led global system – it recognises the importance of Africa's support in various multilateral forums. Africa, with 55 countries, is a significant player in international relations. And so, Beijing is intensifying its efforts to build strong ties with Africa as part of its broader strategy to shift the global balance in its favour.

However, China's engagement in Africa's politics is not a recent phenomenon. Beijing has supported African independence movements, military endeavours, and governance structures. It has also helped develop African economies through investments in infrastructure and industrial projects. This historical relationship continues to be strong, as China intensifies its focus on strengthening ties with Africa's ruling parties.

'Study tours' have remained a key part of China's public diplomacy with Africa. Every year, hundreds of African officials visit China for lectures at universities, visits to provincial governments, and cultural exchanges designed to familiarise them with Chinese traditions and governance practices.

Only now has China's game plan to influence African political elites expanded through the introduction of political schools. During the 8th Forum on China-Africa Cooperation in 2021, China acknowledged its ties to over 100 political parties across 51 African countries.

China's growing influence in Africa is evident not only in the establishment of new educational institutions but also in the deepening of its political relationships. Kenya, for example, has expressed its interest in having a leadership school that would be financed by and modelled on the CCP's Central Party School. These efforts are accompanied by investments in infrastructure. China funded the construction of Kenya's new foreign ministry headquarters, as the two countries were celebrating 60 years of diplomatic relations.

China is not only constructing new institutions, but also refurbishing many existing ones. For instance, China funded the renovation of the Herbert Chitepo School of Ideology in Zimbabwe. Through such initiatives, it aims to establish a governance model similar to its own, based on strong, centralised party systems that offer stability and control. This highlights the effectiveness of building reciprocal relationships, particularly in countries where leadership stability and centralisation are highly valued.

Chinese diplomacy in Africa

China's approach to Africa is built on decades of patient diplomacy. While the Nyerere Leadership School represents a significant milestone, it is only one piece of China's broader strategy to embed itself deeply within Africa's political fabric. China's long-term goal is to promote a Sino-centric world order in which it plays a central role in shaping global governance structures.

However, China is also mindful of potential regime changes in Africa. It knows the importance of nurturing opposition parties to safeguard its interests in case political shifts occur. By establishing political schools and cultivating bonds with ruling and opposition parties, China is ensuring that its influence is intact regardless of political transitions.

China's long game in Africa is not just about economic influence or military strength. It is also about the subtle art of diplomacy and influence for years to come.

China's long game in Africa is not just about economic influence or military strength. It is also about the subtle art of diplomacy and influence

A step behind Kejriwal

By playing second fiddle to Arvind Kejriwal, Atishi has sent out a clear message

STATE OF PLAY

Nikhil M. Babu
nikhil.m@thehindu.co.in

Last September, when senior Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Atishi assumed charge as Delhi Chief Minister, but sat next to an empty chair used by her predecessor Arvind Kejriwal, she sent out a clear message.

Many thought that the optics would end with this sentimental gesture and the new Chief Minister would soon get down to business. However, the first woman Chief Minister of AAP has been carefully playing second fiddle to Mr. Kejriwal. This can be seen even in her minor gestures – she walks with him but always just a small step behind, and addresses him sometimes as 'sir' or 'guru'.

Sources in the party say they do not want her to overshadow the AAP supremo in any way. Others say that the fact that she is a first-time MLA and was chosen to be Chief Minister over founding members of the party and three-time MLAs may also have something to do with it. "It is not completely the party's plan. A lot of what you see is her own decision. She genuinely does not want to overshadow Mr. Kejriwal," a source said.

A day after taking oath as Chief Minister, Ms. Atishi made her first major public appearance at a party event at Jantar Mantar. Her Cabinet colleague, Gopal Rai, spoke first, followed by Dilip Pandey, Manish Sisodia, and Mr. Kejriwal. All of them then stood for the national anthem and left the stage. The Chief Minister did not speak a word.

The next day, when Ms. Atishi entered office, the party's plan became all the more evident. Before she appeared for the cameras and sat on a white chair beside a larger red chair reserved for Mr. Kejriwal, reporters were told that they would not be allowed inside. Only photographers were let in. No interviews were allowed with the Chief Minister later in the day or during the first week. This was unlike the AAP's style of functioning.

Then, during the first day of the two-day session of the Delhi Assembly, Ms. Atishi and Mr. Kejriwal went to inspect roads in north Delhi. It was Mr. Kejriwal who led the visit, with Ms. Atishi following him. After the visit, the former Chief Minister addressed the media. Later that day too, while Mr. Kejriwal spoke for about 18 minutes in the Assembly, launching a scathing attack against the Central government and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Ms. Atishi again remained mum. She later spoke for less than a minute to introduce amendments to a Bill. After the day's session ended, she walked behind Mr. Kejriwal and Mr. Sisodia as they left the Assembly together. She waited for them to get into their car and leave before getting into her relatively inexpensive government vehicle.

Though Ms. Atishi continues to address press conferences, it is Mr. Kejriwal who has announced many important decisions, including Cabinet ones, even though he is no longer a part of the Cabinet.

On November 25, for instance, while addressing a press conference from the party headquarters, Mr. Kejriwal said that the Delhi Cabinet, headed by Ms. Atishi, had passed a proposal for providing pension to 80,000 more senior citizens. Speaking after him, Ms. Atishi said that 'sir' had made this possible.

The AAP's biggest announcement yet, ahead of the Assembly elections, was made on December 12. Starting the programme at the party headquarters, Ms. Atishi said, "Let us welcome our chief and beloved leader Arvind Kejriwal." She then shouted "Arvind Kejriwal!" The crowd replied, "Zindabad!" Mr. Kejriwal then proceeded to announce another Cabinet decision. This was again a departure from how the AAP government functions – Cabinet decisions have always been announced by the Chief Minister from the Secretariat and not the party headquarters.

All this shows that while Ms. Atishi will be at the helm, she will always remain a step behind Mr. Kejriwal, thus cementing his position as the undisputed leader.

It is difficult even for AAP leaders to hide this clearly thought-out strategy. During the first day of the two-day session of the Assembly on September 26, BJP MLA and the Leader of Opposition, Vijender Gupta, began his speech pointing to Ms. Atishi and Mr. Kejriwal. He said, "Chief Minister ji, Chief Minister ji, both of them are here. You can change his seat to any place (Ms. Atishi got the seat reserved for the Chief Minister, while Mr. Kejriwal was moved to seat 41), but what difference does it make?" Many AAP leaders, including Ms. Atishi, smiled at the comment.

The Centre's share in States' revenue has surged in the last decade

The falling efficiency of States in collecting more taxes has deepened their dependency on the Centre

DATA POINT

Samreen Wani

Over the last decade, States have been relying more and more on transfers and grants from the Centre.

In the last decade (FY16 to FY25), 23-30% of the total revenue of States was collected from the Centre as transfers. However, in the 2000s and the first half of 2010, the share was 20-24%. Also, close to 65-70% of the non-tax revenue of States was collected from the Centre as grants in the last decade compared to the 2000s and the first half of the 2010s when the share was lower at 55-65%.

States have also not done enough to efficiently collect taxes to increase their own tax revenue. In addition, revenue from non-tax revenue, other than Central grants, has been diminishing.

The combination of these factors has meant that the dependency of States on Central funds has risen in recent years.

Chart 1 shows the share of States' own tax revenue, non-tax revenue, and Central transfers in their total revenue. For over a decade now, States' own tax revenue as a share of their total revenue has remained considerably below the 50% mark, while in the 2000s and in the early 2010s, it had crossed the 50% mark for many years or remained close to it. Own tax revenue of States includes money raised through stamp duty, registration fees, motor vehicle tax, and other taxes, along with the State component in Goods and Services Tax (GST), or State GST (SGST).

Moreover, the share of non-tax revenue in States' total revenue is likely to go below the 24% mark in FY25 for the first time in the past 25 years. Non-tax revenue of States includes grants from the Centre, earnings from social, fiscal, economic, and general services rendered by the States, interest receipts, and dividends/profits from State public sector enterprises.

While the share of own tax revenue and non-tax revenue of States has reduced, the share of transfers from the Centre has increased (23-30% in the last decade compared to 20-24% in the 15 years before that). This is depicted in **Chart 1.**

Kausik K. Bhadra, PFM consultant, UNICEF, says, "While expenditure responsibilities have been rapidly spiralling, the nearly stagnant own tax revenue mobilisation impedes the States' counter-cyclical expansionary fiscal measures in a sustained manner to boost aggregate demand in the economy."

Mr. Bhadra adds that the share of own tax revenue in States' total revenue is largely driven by SGST. While SGST accounted for 15% of the States' total revenue in FY18, it currently makes up about 22%. This is shown in **Chart 2.** Consequently, the share of own tax revenue, without the contribution from SGST, has declined from 34% to 28%.

This means that not only is the share of States' own tax revenue consistently below the 50% mark, but also an increasing share of it is derived from SGST. It is important to note that the SGST is earned based on rates set by the GST Council and these rates have remained a bone of contention. In the past, Finance Ministers of many Opposition-ruled States including Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and West Bengal have spoken out against the Council's decisions.

Chart 3 shows a detailed split of States' non-tax revenue. It depicts the share of grants from the Centre, earnings from services, interest receipts, and dividends/profits from State public sector enterprises in the States' non-tax revenue. Interest receipts have not exceeded 5% of non-tax revenues in the last decade compared to the 2000s and first half of 2010 when it formed 5-9% of non-tax revenue. Moreover, the share of dividends and profits garnered from State public sector enterprises has remained under 1%.

Earnings from services rendered, such as public health (social service) and power (economic service), did not cross the 30% mark in the last decade. It is only estimated to cross the mark in FY25. Compare this to the 2000s and first half of 2010 when it crossed the mark for many years.

While the share of interest receipts and earnings from services has come down, the share of grants from the Centre has increased (65-70% in the last decade compared to 55-60% in the 15 years before that). This is shown in **Chart 3.**

Charts 1, 2 and 3 when read together show that the Centre is playing a major role in the revenue earned by the States. However, it is also true that many States are not efficiently collecting taxes using avenues at their disposal.

Table 4 shows the ratio of select States' own tax revenue to its GSDP. The trend shows a marked decline in this ratio in six States in particular.

For Tamil Nadu, the own tax revenue to GSDP ratio has gradually declined from 7.72% in FY13-15 to 6.17% in FY 22-24. This has also been the case in Karnataka, Kerala, Bihar, Delhi, and Madhya Pradesh, too. While the ratio has risen in Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Odisha, and Uttarakhand, it has remained stagnant in other States.

"Various States have undertaken a number of measures to improve tax collection from stamp duty, registration fees, and motor vehicle tax. This could likely be considered inadequate and sporadic efforts since these two taxes lack a high degree of technical efficiency according to a number of studies," Mr. Bhadra says.

He adds that "the own tax revenue mobilisation efforts at the State level seems to be falling short of upholding the redistributive macroeconomic implications of tax policies."

samreen.wani@thehindu.co.in

Diminishing States' own revenues

The data for the charts were taken from the RBI's State Finances Report. It also includes The Hindu's calculations

Chart 1: The share of States' own tax revenue, non-tax revenue, and Central transfers in their total revenue (in %)

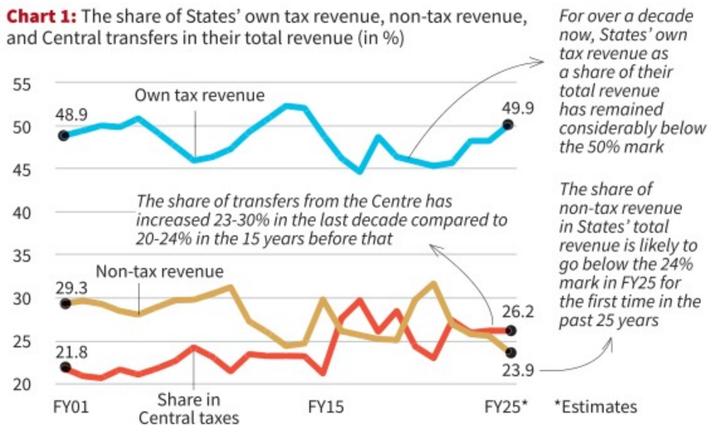


Chart 2: The share of States' SGST and own tax revenue (OTR) without SGST in their total revenue (in %)

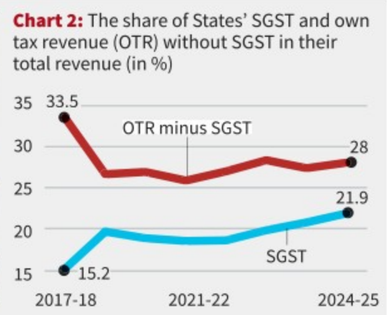


Chart 3: A detailed split of States' non-tax revenue. (Figures in %)

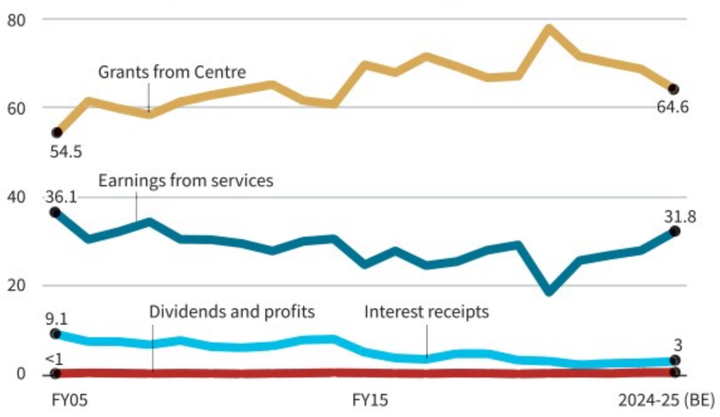


Table 4: Shows the ratio of select States' own tax revenue to their GSDP (in %). FY17, FY21 and FY24 are revised estimates. FY25 is budget estimates

State	FY13-15	FY16-18	FY19-21	FY22- 24
Tamil Nadu	7.72%	6.67%	6.20%	6.17%
Karnataka	7.69%	6.94%	6.27%	6.29%
Bihar	6.04%	6.25%	5.44%	5.75%
Delhi	5.71%	5.26%	4.51%	4.75%
Kerala	7.00%	6.81%	6.28%	6.70%
Madhya Pradesh	7.74%	7.01%	6.01%	6.11%

FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO JANUARY 9, 1975

Destruction of East India Co. records; probe urged

Madras, Jan. 5: The Tamil Nadu Commissioner of Archives and Historical Research, Mr. Badrinath, has suggested to the State Government to appoint a high level committee to probe into the destruction of valuable East India Company records.

Mr. Badrinath told newsmen today that 86,208 East India Company records had been destroyed by the Tamil Nadu Archives between 1969 and 1973 though it was not done by specific authority of the State Governments. These records did not relate to Kachathivu, but certainly belonged to the crucial period between 1786 and 1828 and so they were of immense value for the historical study of South India, he said. They were important because they referred to the agricultural price, law and order situation, tenure system and the relationship between the East India Company and the Polygars, according to him.

Mr. Badrinath, who took charge as Commissioner of Archives in 1974, said as soon as the Tamil Nadu Government came to know of the destruction in the beginning of last year, it had immediately ordered that none of the old records should be destroyed in future until a clear policy had been formulated.

Explaining what he described as "senseless destruction" of public records all over India daily, Mr. Badrinath said this was not surprising in the country lacking a sound criterion to judge the value of a historical document. He said several valuable records relating to Indore State had been and were in the process of being destroyed in Madhya Pradesh. So it would be wrong to isolate what had happened at the Tamil Nadu Archives. The destruction was the work of bureaucrats, who were ignorant of the value of history, he maintained.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JANUARY 9, 1925

News and notes.

A Press Communique says: The Government of India have arranged that from the 1st December, 1924, the opium required for consumption in Sarawa will be sold direct to the Government of Sarawak, subject to certain subsidiary conditions. The agreement will remain in force for a period of five years and a fixed price will be paid. The number of chests of opium offered for sale by public auction in in Calcutta is exclusive of any such quantity sold direct.

Indian Navy personnel during the rescue operation for labourers trapped inside a coal mine at Umrangso, Assam, on Wednesday. PTI

One body retrieved from Assam mine; no signs of others

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

Army divers on Wednesday retrieved the body of a Nepalese miner from a flooded coal mine in Dima Hasao district of Assam. Despite efforts by multiple rescue agencies and a remotely operated search vehicle, no signs have yet been found of the other eight miners who have been trapped for more than 48 hours.

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said that Army's 21 Para divers had recovered a body from the bottom of the coal mine on Wednesday morning.

"The body recovered has been identified as that of Ganga Bahadur Sresth from Udayapur district in Nepal," he said.

Meanwhile, the BJP-ruled North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council has come under fire for allegedly allowing illegal coal mining in the area.

Assam's Special Director-General of Police Harmeet Singh said that efforts were on, involving multiple agencies, to locate the remaining trapped miners.

"Today, four divers, including the National Disaster Response Force and Army personnel, managed to retrieve the body. The remotely operated vehicle from the Navy conducted a round of the shaft, utilising its photography and sonar capabilities, but found nothing else," Mr. Singh said.

An ONGC dewatering pump, used to suck out water, has been loaded into an MI-17 helicopter at Kumbhirgram in southern Assam's Barak Valley and flown to the spot. The State Disaster Response Force have also deployed such dewatering pumps at the mine.

Debolal Gorlosa, the Chief Executive Member of the North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council, has been under fire for allegedly allowing illegal coal mining operations in the area. The Bharatiya Janata Party rules the council, which encompasses the Dima Hasao district.

As ISRO chief, V. Narayanan will have to hit the ground running

The space agency has lined up major projects such as Gaganyaan human spaceflight, Chandrayaan-4 and Bharatiya Antariksha Station; days after he takes over on January 14, the space agency will launch GSLV Mk-II/IRNSS-1 K mission

Tiki Rajwi
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

V. Narayanan, rocket and spacecraft propulsion expert, will take over as the Chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) on January 14, with the retirement of the current chief of the space agency, S. Somanath. India's space sector is in a reform mode, and the space agency has lined up major projects such as the Gaganyaan human spaceflight, the Chandrayaan-4 mission and the development of the country's own space station.

Speaking to *The Hindu* on Wednesday, Dr. Narayanan, who has been heading the ISRO's Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC) since January 2018, described his upcoming assignment as a "great responsibility" and a "great opportunity to follow in the footsteps of stalwarts who led the ISRO over the decades".

Given the ISRO's busy calendar for 2025, Dr. Narayanan is aware that he has little or no time to get going. "Towards January-end, we have the GSLV Mk-II/IRNSS-1 K mission. We also have lined up the first of the uncrewed flights of the Gaganyaan programme, the G-1 mission, as well as a commercial launch using the LVM3 launch vehicle," he said. "These apart, there are several experiments related to the Gaganyaan programme. So you see, we have our hands full."

On an upward trajectory: V. Narayanan with a model of the Chandrayaan-3 moon lander. M PERIASAMY

High-profile programmes on the ISRO's to-do list include the Chandrayaan-4 moon mission, the development of the space station, Bharatiya Antariksha Station, a second mission to Mars, and the maiden Venus Orbiter Mission. While all of these may not happen during Dr. Narayanan's tenure, the space agency has kicked off preparations.

The Appointments Committee of the Union Cabinet has decided that Dr. Narayanan will take over as Secretary, Department of Space, and Chairman, Space Commission, "for a period of two years" from January 14.

> Today, all the spacefaring nations truly understand our abilities and strengths. Strength respects strength
>
> **V. NARAYANAN**
> ISRO Chairman designate

Dr. Narayanan, born into a humble farming family in Kanniyakumari district of Tamil Nadu, brings a wealth of experience to the Chairman's post, having joined the space agency in 1984 and worked in one of its core areas – rocket propulsion.

Dr. Narayanan said increasing India's presence in space tops his list of priorities. He said the space sector reforms set in motion a few years ago by opening it up to private players will play a vital role in this area.

"If you look at societal and strategic applications, today we have about 53 satellites in orbit. We need many more for communication, navigation and earth observation purposes. The ISRO on its own cannot meet this requirement. The reforms will help in this area. We have been giving opportunities to the private sector and the start-up ecosystem," he said.

Dr. Narayanan drew attention to India's plans to expand its share in the global economy from 2% to 10%. "So far, we have not concentrated much on the space economy aspect. We need to have our due share, though. We are targeting 10%," he said.

He reiterated the importance that the ISRO places on collaboration with other space agencies. "In our development stage as a space agency, indeed there was support. Today, all the spacefaring nations truly understand our abilities and strengths. Strength respects strength," he said.

Village upbringing

Dr. Narayanan was born to C. Vanniyaperumal, a farmer, and S. Thangammal, a homemaker, at Melakattuvilai, a village in Kanniyakumari district. He has three brothers and two sisters. Young Narayanan and his siblings studied in a Tamil-medium school near their home. It was when he was in Class 9 that their home got an electricity connection. He was a Class 10 topper in his school. Dr. Narayanan is married to Kavitharaj N.K. The couple has a daughter, Divyaa, and a son, Kalesh.

He is an alumnus of the Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur. He obtained his M.Tech. in cryogenic engineering with a first rank in 1989 and a Ph.D. in aerospace engineering in 2001.

As a rocket propulsion expert, Dr. Narayanan has done important work on major ISRO missions and programmes, including cryogenic technology; the moon (Chandrayaan 1, 2 and 3), Mars (Mangalyaan) and Aditya-L1 (to study the sun) missions; and the upcoming Gaganyaan programme during a career spanning four decades.

On joining the ISRO on February 1, 1984, he initially worked on solid propulsion at the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre here. In 1989, he moved to the LPSC to work on cryogenic propulsion. "His contributions made India one among six countries in the world to have the complex and high-performance cryogenic propulsion systems and made it self-reliant in this area. He has finalised the Propulsion Road Map of ISRO for the next 20 years [2017-2037]," the LPSC has noted.

HC refuses to direct Centre to rehabilitate migrants from Pakistan

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

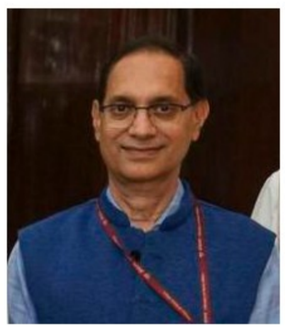
The Delhi High Court on Wednesday declined to direct the Centre to provide a comprehensive rehabilitation package for migrants from Pakistan who obtained citizenship under the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) saying it was a policy matter of the government.

A Bench of Acting Chief Justice Vibhu Bakhru and Justice Tushar Rao Gedela asked the Centre to decide the petitioner's representation on the issue.

The petitioner, Akhil Bhartiya Dharma Prasar Samiti, said there was a sizeable number of migrants from Pakistan who obtained citizenship pursuant to the Citizenship Amendment Act, 2019. The migrants were in need of comprehensive resettlement measures to enable them to live with dignity in India, the plea said.

Advocate Divita Dutta, representing the petitioner, said the migrants from Pakistan are living in seven camps spread across the city. Some of them, the plea said, lived in deplorable conditions prompting an urgent need to provide them with rehabilitation measures towards shelter, access to healthcare, education, water, electricity, and sanitation.

The court noted that the rehabilitation package and the extent of its requirement were "purely a matter of policy".



Tuhin Kanta Pandey

Tuhin Kanta Pandey entrusted with Revenue Department

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

With a little over three weeks to go for the Union Budget on February 1, the Centre on Wednesday shifted the recently appointed Revenue Secretary Arunish Chawla to the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM), and entrusted Finance Secretary Tuhin Kanta Pandey with the Revenue Department.

Mr. Chawla had taken charge as Revenue Secretary on December 26, taking over from Economic Affairs Secretary Ajay Seth who held additional charge of the department since incumbent Sanjay Malhotra was appointed Governor of the Reserve Bank of India last month.

Chawla to steer DIPAM

The Finance Secretary who was also entrusted with steering DIPAM and the Department of Public Enterprises, will now hand over charge of those two departments to Mr. Chawla, who has also been assigned additional charge of Secretary in the Culture Ministry, till a regular incumbent is appointed, the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet decided.

India ready to support Maldives in enhancing its defence preparedness, says Rajnath Singh

Dinakar Peri
NEW DELHI

India has handed over defence equipment and stores to the Maldives on the request of the Maldivian government, the Defence Ministry said on Wednesday as New Delhi also reaffirmed its readiness to support Male in capability enhancement for defence preparedness as per its national priorities.

This was conveyed by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh during talks with his visiting Maldivian counterpart, Mohammed Ghassan Maumoon.

"Raksha Mantri (Defence Minister) reaffirmed India's readiness to support the Maldives in capability enhancement for defence preparedness, including provisioning of defence platforms & assets to augment its capacities, as per its national priorities and in line with New Delhi's 'Neighborhood First' policy and the vision of SAGAR (Security And Growth for All in the Region)," the Ministry said in a statement.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and his Maldivian counterpart Mohammed Ghassan Maumoon, in New Delhi. R V MOORTHY

Mr. Maumoon appreciated India's historical role as the "first responder" for the Maldives and thanked New Delhi for assisting Male in augmenting the modern infrastructural capacities and training of defence and security personnel, the statement said.

Stating that the talks were fruitful, Mr. Singh said in a post on X, "Several issues pertaining to deepening defence cooperation were discussed which would also help in enhancing the capability of Maldives National Defence Forces. Today's discussions will add new vigour to India-Maldives relations."

During the talks, the two Ministers comprehensively reviewed various aspects of bilateral defence and security cooperation, the statement said. They also reasserted the firm commitment to work closely in realising the joint vision for India-Maldives comprehensive economic and maritime security partnership. This is the first visit by the Maldivian Defence Minister to India since the new government came to power in the island nation.

Sources said they discussed the Ekatha Harbour project for the MNDF Coast Guard, for which the foundation stone was laid by Mr. Singh and then Maldivian counterpart, Mariya Didi, during an official visit in May 2023. The development of the Coast Guard Harbour and repair facility at Sifavaru is one of the biggest grant-in-aid projects of India.

Earlier, the visiting Minister laid a wreath at the National War Memorial. He was also accorded a tri-service guard of honour.

Sambhal mosque case: HC seeks reply from govt. and ASI

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Allahabad High Court on Wednesday sought a response from the Union and State governments, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and local authorities on a plea moved by the Shahi Jama Masjid committee in Sambhal challenging a trial court's order.

The trial court had directed an Advocate Commissioner to survey the mosque while dealing with a suit that claimed that it was built after destroying a temple.

A Bench of Justice Rohit Ranjan Agarwal also ordered a stay on the proceedings in the case by the trial court in Sambhal till February 25, which is also the next date of the hearing of the matter in the High Court.

The lower court has now fixed March 5 as the next date of hearing.

The Supreme Court, in November last year, had stayed the trial court proceedings in the case, directing it to not to hear the matter until the petition filed by the mosque committee against the survey order is listed in the Allahabad High Court.

"The Supreme Court directed all the courts not to entertain new suits seeking surveys of any place of worship until further orders. We filed a copy of the said order in the [trial] court, which fixed March 5 as the next date of hearing," Shakil Ahmad Wari, the advocate representing the Muslim side, told reporters.

Gopal Sharma, the lawyer representing the Hindu plaintiffs, said no reply was filed by the opposite side. "We filed an application with the court demanding their opportunity to reply should now end," he said.

A view of the Shahi Jama Masjid in Sambhal.

The local court in Sambhal, on November 19, had ordered a survey of the Mughal-era mosque while hearing a petition that claimed that it was built in 1526 after demolishing a Harihar temple, dedicated to Kalki, the last incarnation of Lord Vishnu. The eight plaintiffs in the suit had demanded the right to access the mosque.

Clashes after survey

On November 24, violence erupted in Sambhal after clashes between the police and those who gathered to protest against the survey. Five people died and several others were injured in stone pelting and firing. The Uttar Pradesh Police have denied allegations that they fired at protesters.

Almost 40 days after the violence, the court-appointed Advocate Commissioner, Ramesh Raghav, submitted the survey report in the local court in a sealed cover last week.

Cong. suggests relief in income tax for middle class in Union Budget

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The downward revision of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth estimates for the current fiscal provides a gloomy backdrop to the upcoming Union Budget. and radical action is needed to dispel "the cloud of growth slowdown and investment chill" in the country, the Congress said on Wednesday.

Congress general secretary (communications) Jairam Ramesh, in a statement, said there should be income support for India's poor, higher Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) wages, and increased minimum support prices (MSPs).

Jairam Ramesh

Drastic simplification of the "comically complex" Goods and Services Tax regime, and income tax relief for the middle class are also the need of the hour, the party said.

"The advance estimates released by the Union government for GDP growth in FY25 project a mere 6.4% growth. This is a four-year low and a sharp deceleration compared to the 8.2% growth recorded in FY24 (2023-24). It is even lower than the recent RBI estimate of 6.6% growth which itself marked a reduction from the earlier projection of 7.2%," Mr. Ramesh said. "In a few short weeks, the bottom has fallen out of the Indian economy, with the all-important manufacturing sector simply refusing to expand as it should."

Asserting that the government could no longer deny the reality of India's growth slowdown, he said that India's consumption story was the biggest pain point, as it had gone into "reverse swing" in the past 10 years.

Mr. Ramesh said the Union Budget for 2024-25 had made grand promises on increase in capex investment, with an allocation of ₹11.11 lakh crore, but until November 2024, only ₹5.13 lakh crore had been spent.

"The government's own incompetence in spending its funds is partly responsible for the wider economic gloom," he said.

Plan scheme for cashless medicare by March 14: SC

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday directed the Centre to frame a scheme by March 14, 2025, for the cashless medical treatment of road accident victims during golden hour when their near and dear ones are not around and there may not be anyone to help them with money.

It noted that it has been three years since Section 162 of the Motor Vehicles Act came into force. Yet, the Centre has not framed a scheme for its implementation on the ground.

‘India’s digital policies, talent getting global recognition’

The IT Minister says the country is crafting balanced policies on data protection, online fact-checking, children on social media, and AI regulations while insisting that society and law have to walk in tandem; he says U.S.-based tech firms operating in India must comply with our law on data transfer restrictions; now the global IT industry is also looking at us as a potential demand centre, he adds

INTERVIEW

Ashwini Vaishnaw

Varghese K. George
Aroon Deep
NEW DELHI

In the past, global IT firms saw India as a way to save costs, but they are now seeing the country as a leading source of talent and demand, Union Minister of Electronics and Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnaw says. He speaks on the Digital Personal Data Protection Rules and AI regulation. Excerpts:

What can we expect in the coming months with the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Rules in terms of further consultation and implementation?

The consultations so far have been extensive, and people are by and large okay with the provisions. I don’t see too many amendments coming in the final notification beyond some tweaks. We have also worked on the entire digital implementation framework of the DPDP Act, so that the Data Protection Board of India’s portal is ready, and implementation will happen in a totally digital way.

We would like to notify it as soon as we can, and of course we’ll give a good transition period to the industry to move to a new regime. I think we should see the implementation of this Act starting somewhere in the middle of this year.

In the event that government organisations are in breach of standards in the DPDP Rules, will they also be liable to the same penalties and consequences?

Of course. In this country, we have a system where the law stands the same for everybody. The law is supreme.

How do you respond to concerns on the Data Protection Board of India’s autonomy?

The law has been drafted in a way to ensure the functioning and autonomy of the Board. What will be a big challenge will be getting the right people who understand law, digital technology, the financial implications, societal implications. We are working on awareness programmes.

Why are submissions in the Rules’ consultation process not public, as they are in those held by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India?

You cannot compare TRAI’s consultation process with a lawmaking consultation. Lawmaking is a sovereign act enabled by the Constitution. Laws are made in a very structured manner. TRAI consultations are regulations for the industry.

The Rules hint at data transfer restrictions abroad. Does this conflict with other countries’ laws, especially for U.S. firms doing business here?

The laws passed by the Parliament of India will be applicable to every entity, from every geography that is providing services here.

SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

On Tuesday, Meta announced that they are moving away from professional fact-checkers to community-led fact-checking. The IT Rules had provisions on fact-checking bodies for general news and news on the government...

This whole point proves that the stand that we had taken was the right one, that the owner or the generator of the information, or the person who is well placed to fact check in a particular sector on a particular subject is the right person to do so. [On legal challenges to fact-checking requirements:] Let the courts decide. This is a very logical way to proceed, and there is no bias in this entire thought process.

On Monday, a subcommittee under the IndiaAI Mission put out a draft framework for AI governance. What is the government’s view on tackling AI regulation?

AI has three major dimensions. First, the power that it brings for solving our very complex problems, which we must harness. Second, the potential harms it can cause. And third, the opportunities it creates for our companies, our youth and startups, that we should not block.

That’s why our Principal Scientific Adviser has taken this initiative under the honourable Prime Minister’s guidance, to create a holistic plan for the country, to create a good regulatory framework which develops trust, and balances innovation and regulation. We will finalise the draft after getting inputs.

Do you think that innovation and strict rules are necessarily in conflict?

They’re not. The reason I say this is because some geographies have actually put so much emphasis on the regulation part that the innovation potential there has reduced; and there are some geographies which do not want any regulation, they simply want 100% innovation.

We are actually trying to place ourselves somewhere between the two.

And I think the world is noticing; in informal meetings, people are saying that this is the right template which the world should follow. There is an impact [of big tech and social media] on institutions which have been built over centuries, and most societies are today worried that the institutions are weakened because of the misinformation and the fake news.

So everywhere, society is looking for the right balance between absolute free speech and the right mix of regulation.

The Rules do not outright ban social media for children, like some countries are doing, but require authentication of parental consent.

Here again, we have taken a very nuanced approach and our approach is that these are things which must evolve, and the society must create a consensus around these subjects. Society and the law have to walk in tandem.

The Digital India Act has been planned to replace the Information Technology Act, 2000. Are we still moving in that direction?

We have to overhaul the entire digital framework. We began with the two horizontal laws, the Telecommunication Act, 2023 and the DPDP Act, 2023, which cut across all the sectors and have an impact on all sectors. There will be certain verticals which are specific to sectors, and we are working on this whole comprehensive framework.

Microsoft this week announced $3 billion in India investments, and there were deals announced with the IT Ministry and private firms. What role does the private sector have in our AI ambitions?

All players in the industry have a big role to play in our growth story. We see a very clear trend that the competitiveness of our talent is very well accepted, and so is the certainty of our policies. So now the global IT industry, which was earlier looking at India mostly from a cost and talent arbitrage perspective, is also looking at India as a potential demand centre.

(Full interview on newsth.live/vaishnaw)

More voters than govt.’s population estimate in Maharashtra: Congress

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A day after Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar reiterated that voters’ names were added to the electoral rolls in a foolproof process, the Congress on Wednesday said the Election Commission appeared to have enrolled more voters in Maharashtra than the adult population of the State estimated by the National Democratic Alliance government for a report.

The CEC on Tuesday, while addressing a press conference to announce the dates of the Delhi Assembly election, sought to clarify doubts over the increase in the number of electors in the voters’ lists for the recent elections.

In a statement on Wednesday, Praveen Chakravarty, chairperson of the Congress data analytics department, said the Congress had pointed out the inclusion of names of nearly 50 lakh new voters on the list in just four months for the Maharashtra Assembly election.

Praveen Chakravarty

Detailed outline

The CEC had outlined the process of voter addition in detail, and said that the process was extremely tight and robust to prevent fake voter additions.

“We have a simple one line response – if the process is so robust, how is it that the total eligible electors in Maharashtra seems to be more than the total adult population as estimated by the Narendra Modi government’s own report,” Mr. Chakravarty asked.

The party’s statement quoted from page 229 of the November 2019 report of the National Commission on Population of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, saying Maharashtra’s estimated adult population in 2024 could be calculated as 9.54 crore, based on the five-year projections of the report.

“As per the EC, the total enrolled electors in Maharashtra for Vidhan Sabha election were 9.7 crore. That is, the Election Commission seems to have enrolled 16 lakh more electors than the entire adult population in Maharashtra, as estimated by the Narendra Modi government,” it said.

Just this one simple data point showing the EC may have registered more electors than adult population quashes the CEC’s claim that the process of voter addition and deletion was very robust and unquestionable, it said.

Aadhaar data

Mr. Chakravarthy said the Aadhaar enrolment data in Maharashtra reinforced the Congress’s claim that the EC’s total voter enrolment in Maharashtra may be higher than the total adult population.

The Congress, in a letter to the CEC on December 10, sought for data related to the Maharashtra Assembly election, including constituency-wise voter rolls and booth-wise result sheets for the Lok Sabha and Assembly elections to be made public. A nine-member delegation of the Congress had earlier met the commission and demanded the same.

SC to take up pleas challenging CEC and EC appointment law in February

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar’s retirement in February brought back into focus before the Supreme Court on Wednesday the need to fast-track a decision on the legality of a new law dealing with the appointment of Election Commissioners which gives the Union government a dominant role.

Justice Surya Kant, heading a three-judge Bench of Justices Dipankar Datta and K.V. Viswanathan, highlighted that the test regarding the validity of the Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service, and Term of Office) Act, 2023 would hinge on whether the court’s authority to pronounce binding decisions under Article 141 of the Constitution could be circumvented or diluted by a law. “The real test here is between the court’s opinion and exercise of legislative powers,” he said.

The petitioners pointed to the retirement of CEC Rajiv Kumar to advance hearing. FILE PHOTO

The petitions in question raised the pivotal legal question whether Parliament possessed the authority to promulgate a Gazette notification or ordinance to nullify or amend a Constitution Bench judgment.

The petitioners, including the NGO Association for Democratic Reforms and activist Jaya Thakur, have said that the law was introduced in December 2023 to dilute a Constitution Bench judgment of the Supreme Court in the Anoop Baranwal case on March 2, 2023.

Validity of Section 7(1)

The petitions have primarily challenged the validity of Section 7(1) of the statute. Section 7(1) mandates that the President will appoint the Chief Election Commissioner and the Election Commissioners on the recommendation of a Selection Committee of the Prime Minister, the Leader of Opposition in the House of the People and a Union Cabinet Minister to be nominated by the Prime Minister.

The judgment had directed the Chief Election Commissioner and the Election Commissioners to be appointed by the President on the advice tendered by a Selection Committee of Prime Minister, Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha/leader of the single largest party in Opposition and the Chief Justice of India.

The Constitution Bench had explained that a committee of diverse heads was necessary to protect the “fierce independence, neutrality and honesty” of the institution of the Election Commission and to end government monopoly and “exclusive control” over appointments to the highest poll body.

Advocate Prashant Bhushan, for the petitioners, urged the court to fix an early date, saying the validity of the law has to be decided before the next crucial appointments to the EC. “Hear it next week,” he suggested.

However, Justice Kant said the case could likely be heard on February 4.

Cong. offers health cover of ₹25 lakh for all in Delhi

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Wednesday announced the Jeevan Raksha Yojana, promising health insurance coverage of ₹25 lakh for every citizen in Delhi if voted to power.

Former Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, at a press conference, said the scheme would be implemented in Delhi as soon as the Congress formed a government, and that it would be a “game changer”.

This is the second of the five guarantees from the Congress for the people of Delhi, following the launch of the “Pyari Didi Yojana” for women.

Delhi Congress chief Devender Yadav said the scheme was a necessity for Delhi’s residents, who face severe health risks from air and water pollution.

AAP and BJP spar in Delhi over lavish spending on government residences

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A day after Assembly election was announced in Delhi, the politics over opulence continued to play out in the national capital on Wednesday, with the Aam Aadmi Party and the Bharatiya Janata Party accusing each other of extravagant spending on government residences.

Mega showdown: AAP leaders Sanjay Singh and Saurabh Bhardwaj during the march in New Delhi on Wednesday. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

While the BJP has dubbed the 6 Flagstaff Road bungalow, which was earlier occupied by AAP national convener and former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, ‘Sheesh Mahal’, the ruling party in Delhi has named Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s residence ‘Raj Mahal’.

AAP leaders on Wednesday marched to the Flagstaff Road bungalow to expose the “lies” of the BJP that it had a swimming pool, a commode made of gold, and so on, but they were stopped by the police from entering the house.

The leaders then tried to reach the Prime Minister’s residence but were stopped near the Lok Kalyan Marg Metro Station, where they staged a protest. The AAP, which had on Tuesday challenged the BJP to throw open the doors to the PM’s “₹2,700-crore” official residence to expose the luxuries there, said the BJP leaders were running away from it.

Hitting back, the BJP placed banners in various areas saying that the “people of Delhi are asking for accounts of their tax paid”. The party alleged that the 6 Flagstaff Road bungalow was renovated “secretly”.

The property is currently under scrutiny by Central investigative agencies for alleged irregularities in its renovation. The Congress too had targeted the AAP over the issue.

AAP leader Sanjay Singh, who headed the party’s protest, alleged that the BJP’s refusal to open the gates to the PM’s residence confirmed the claims about its ₹2,700-crore price tag.

Delhi BJP chief Virendra Sachdeva accused the AAP of playing “petty politics”.

“AAP leaders are attempting to deflect criticism over the ‘Sheesh Mahal’ bungalow controversy by raising questions about the Prime Minister’s residence. The Prime Minister’s residence is an officially designated property where construction and renovation have been transparently carried out, unlike the alleged irregularities surrounding the construction activities at 6 Flag Staff Road during Kejriwal’s administration,” he said.

Mr. Sachdeva and other party workers marched to 17 A.B. Mathura Road bungalow allotted to Chief Minister Atishi.

READ
SPORTSTAR
EVERY FORTNIGHT.
TO SUBSCRIBE, VISIT
www.thehindugroup.in/subscribe

HITES
HLL INFRA TECH SERVICES LTD
HITES on behalf of DMER, Govt. of Maharashtra invites online bids for the **“Construction of Residential Quarters (Type II, III, IV&V) & 250 Bedded Hospital at Maharashtra Institute of Mental Health Pune on EPC Basis”**. PAC is **Rs.77,62,70,100/-** (Excl. GST). For tender details and bid submission, please visit **https://etenders.gov.in/eprocure/app** and **www.hllhites.com**. Tender documents will be available in e-tender portal from **16.01.2025** onwards.
VP (ID) HITES South Operations

भारत सरकार टकसाल, मुंबई
INDIA GOVERNMENT MINT, MUMBAI
एनएबीएल/आईएसओ 17025:2017 प्रमाणित इकाई | NABL/ISO 17025:2017 Certified Unit
भारत प्रतिभूति मुद्रण तथा मुद्रा निर्माण निगम लिमिटेड की इकाई | A Unit of Security Printing and Minting Corporation of India Limited
सीआईएन : U22213DL2006GOI144763 | CIN : U22213DL2006GOI144763
मिनी-रत्न श्रेणी । सीपीएसई (भारत सरकार के पूर्ण स्वामीत्वाधीन) | Mini -Ratna Category - I CPSE (Wholly owned by Govt. of India)
शहीद भगत सिंह मार्ग, फोर्ट, मुंबई – 400 001 | Shahid Bhagat Singh Road, Fort, Mumbai-400 001
Tel: 022 - 22663199 Ext. 250/217 Fax: 022 – 22661450 Email: igm.mumbai@spmcil.com Web: igmmumbai.spmcil.com

NOTICE

BOOKING OF “Shree Swaminarayan Mandir, Vadtaldham Dwishatabdi Mahotsav” and “Centenary Year SBI Mumbai Main Branch Building” Commemorative Coin Sets

India Government Mint, Mumbai (A unit of Security Printing and Minting Corporation of India Ltd.) is pleased to notify booking of commemorative coin sets in Proof and Uncirculated varieties of following themes.

Theme	Proof (Rs.)	UNC (Rs.)
Shree Swaminarayan Mandir, Vadtaldham Dwishatabdi Mahotsav (Denomination of ₹200) - Folder Packing	6620.00	6195.00
Shree Swaminarayan Mandir, Vadtaldham Dwishatabdi Mahotsav (Denomination of ₹200) - Wooden Packing	6870.00	NA
Centenary Year SBI Mumbai Main Branch Building (Denomination of ₹100) – Folder Packing	3555.00	3375.00
Centenary Year SBI Mumbai Main Branch Building (Denomination of ₹100) – Wooden Packing	3765.00	NA

The booking period will be from **09.01.2025,** the coin sets can be booked online on our website https://www.indiagovtmint.in. Alternately, the coin sets can be ordered offline by submitting an order form available on our website or visit our store at Shahid Bhagat Singh Road, Fort, Mumbai - 400001.
***50gms Silver Coin on Shree Ram Janmabhoomi Mandir, Ayodhya available for sale.**
For other detailed terms and conditions and online booking please visit customer corner section of our web site: **https://www.indiagovtmint.in**.
-Sd-
Manager (Marketing)
For Chief General Manager
Follow us on : @SPMCILINDIA /SPMCILIndia /spmcilindia

INBRIEF

Filmmaker and poet Pritish Nandy passes away at 73

Poet, painter, film producer and former parliamentarian Pritish Nandy passed away at 73 on Wednesday. Actor Anupam Kher paid tribute in a post on X, calling Mr. Nandy a fearless artist and a source of strength during his struggling years. A noted magazine editor and literary voice, Mr. Nandy established his production banner, Pritish Nandy Communications, in the 1990s. Nandy was given the Padma Shri in 1977 for his contributions to Indian literature. He also hosted the DD show called *The Pritish Nandy Show*. He was awarded the Karmaveer Puraskar in 2008. Nandy is survived by his wife, Rina, and children Kushan, Ishita and Rangita.

ISRO delays satellite docking experiment again, citing drift

ISRO has once again postponed the Space Docking Experiment (SpaDEx) involving two satellites, citing excessive drift during a crucial manoeuvre. The SpaDEx was supposed to take place on Thursday. "While making a manoeuvre to reach 225 m between satellites the drift was found to be more than expected, post non-visibility period. The planned docking for tomorrow is postponed. Satellites are safe. Stay tuned for updates," ISRO said in a post on 'X' on Wednesday. This is the second time in two days that the ISRO postponed the SpaDEx. PTI

India balancing on twin pillars of technology, tradition: Jaishankar

At the Youth Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, External Affairs Minister says the nation's quest is unique because development is based on a democratic framework; he lauded the youth, at home and abroad, for contribution to innovations in every sector

Satyasundar Barik
BHUBANESWAR

India is progressing within a democratic framework, balancing on the twin pillars of technology and tradition, said External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar at the Youth Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) in Bhubaneswar on Wednesday.

"We are today well on the way to address long-standing challenges to build a modern, inclusive and progressive society. Our quest is unique because the largest nation in the world is developing in that manner in a democratic framework. The mantra of that journey is to advance, as Prime Minister Narendra Modi says, on the two legs of technology and tradition," Mr. Jaishankar remarked.

The youth of the country can be the defining factor in the pace of that endeavour and the realisation of the goals, he added.

Mr. Modi is scheduled to inaugurate the PBD on Thursday.

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya, Odisha CM Mohan Majhi and Minister of State for External Affairs Pabitra Margherita in Bhubaneswar on Wednesday. ANI

Stating that the thought behind holding a Youth PBD was to recognise the special contribution that young minds make, at home and abroad, Mr. Jaishankar said, "At a time when so many key developments in the world are being shaped by this younger generation – whether we talk of AI and EV, innovation or start-ups, space or drones, sports, chess, cricket – there is all the more reason to do so."

"The very country that was predicted to go under ended up supplying vaccines and medicines to the entire world. A different but equally telling example is what we see in the realm of space, where there is a growing competition internationally. Our Chandrayaan-3 landing, the Aditya L1 observatory and the proposed Gaganyaan mission are powerful inspirations," the Union Minister said.

"In a digital era, the scale of UPI transactions speaks volumes, both of our infrastructure and of our mindsets. The new India, with 90,000 start-ups and 100-plus unicorns, has calling cards like Drone Didi, Atal Tinkering Labs, hackathons, green hydrogen mission and nano-fertilizers," he said.

Guest of honour Dev Pragad, a person of Indian origin and chief executive officer of *Newsweek*, narrated how diligent effort had enabled a turnaround of the American media organisation that he helms.

Odisha in focus

Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi took the opportunity to showcase the State's strength in mineral resources, tourism and human resources.

"While Odisha's past is steeped in history, its present is defined by transformation and progress. Today, Odisha stands as a leader in mining and industries such as steel and aluminium, while also emerging as a hub for sports, IT and skill development," Mr. Majhi said.

At a business session on the sidelines of PBD 2025, Mr. Jaishankar focused on the 3Ts – Trade, Technology, and Tourism – as critical drivers of Odisha's growth.

He lauded the State's rich natural and cultural advantages, which position it as a hub for global trade, a fertile ground for technological innovation, and a premier tourism destination.

ICMR gets low-cost tech to detect iron deficiency

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

AnemiaPhone, a technology developed by Cornell University researchers to accurately, quickly, and cheaply assess iron deficiency, has been transferred to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) for integration into its programmes for anaemia alleviation, women's health, and maternal and child health.

A release issued by Cornell University said that AnemiaPhone would enable access to rapid screening, and diagnosis of iron deficiency at the point of need.

Iron deficiency is a leading cause of anaemia, which affects 50% to 70% of pregnant women in India.

The technology requires a small finger stick, a drop of blood on a test strip similar to a COVID-19 home test, and a few minutes for the reader to assess. The information is uploaded to a clinical database via mobile phone, wireless tablet or computer. Healthcare workers can interpret the test and provide guidance, triage and referral, or intervention on the spot.

No report of any unusual outbreak pattern of HMPV in China right now: WHO

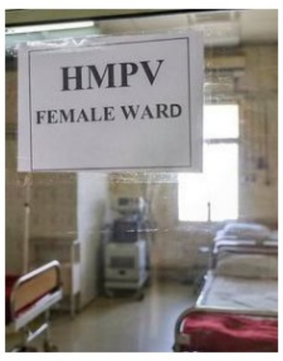
The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The World Health Organization is in contact with Chinese health officials and has not received any reports of unusual outbreak patterns, its latest disease outbreak report on Human Metapneumovirus (HMPV) said.

The WHO said the Chinese authorities reported that their healthcare system was not overwhelmed and that there had been no emergency declarations or responses triggered.

"WHO continues to monitor respiratory illnesses at global, regional, and country levels through collaborative surveillance systems, and provides updates as needed," it said.

Based on data published by China, covering the period up to December 29, 2024, acute respiratory infections have increased during recent weeks and detection of seasonal influenza, rhinovirus, and HMPV, particularly in northern provinces of China, has increased.



The Ahmedabad civil hospital has opened a female ward for HMPV patients. PTI

The WHO said that though there had been an increase in respiratory pathogen detections, it had been within the range expected for this time of the year during the northern hemisphere winter.

In China, influenza is among the most commonly detected respiratory pathogens currently affecting people with acute respiratory infections.

"HMPV is a common respiratory virus found to circulate in many countries in winter through to spring, although not all countries routinely test and publish data on trends in HMPV. While some cases can be hospitalised with bronchitis or pneumonia, most people infected with HMPV have mild upper respiratory symptoms similar to the common cold and recover after a few days," the report further said.

It added that there had been international interest in a potential increase of respiratory virus transmission in China, particularly HMPV, including suggestions of hospitals being overwhelmed.

Prioritise studies on oilseeds, rice, pulses hybrids, says official

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

PM's Principal Secretary says hybrid seeds have to be affordable to smallholder farmers

Endorsing the use of hybrid seeds to increase crop production and reduce import dependency, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister P.K. Mishra said here on Wednesday that hybrid research has to produce products that have higher productivity than open-pollinated seed varieties.

Inaugurating a three-day national symposium on hybrid technology for enhanced crop productivity, Dr. Mishra gave the examples of rice, pulses and oilseeds, and said they need high priority in hybrid research.

"We need to bring hybrid pigeon pea to market and scale it up. This will help in bridging availability gap in pulses. Similarly, in oilseeds too, we should increase productivity using hybrids. This is a priority for the country," he said.

The senior bureaucrat said hybrids have to be affordable to smallholder farmers. "If research can make farmers save hybrid seeds from one season to another season without losing heterosis, as they do with open-pollinated crops, it would be a great scientific contribution to increasing farmers incomes," Dr. Mishra said.

He added that there was an urgent need for adopting hybrid technologies to ensure food and nutritional security for the country's growing population.

He said the percentage of workforce dependent on agriculture still stands as high as 37%.

Simultaneous elections: MPs on House committee seek more time for deliberations

Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

At the first meeting of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on two Bills on conducting simultaneous polls on Wednesday, Opposition members argued that the panel should be given at least a year to complete its work, considering the scope and scale of deliberations required.

The committee has time till the first week of the next session of Parliament, which is likely to begin on January 31, leaving it with just three weeks of time.

The meeting began with a presentation by the Union Ministry of Law and Justice on the provisions of the Bills.

Opposition members said the two Bills violated the basic structure doctrine of the Constitution, since they sought to make the State legislature subordinate to the national legislature.

Several members questioned the government's argument that simultaneous polls are better for the economy. According to sources, Lok Sabha member and Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said all the studies quoted by former President Ram Nath Kovind-led high-level committee to claim that simultaneous polls will significantly reduce expenditure, are from the pre-EVM era.

Cost of holding polls

Members also asked if the cost of holding elections has come down since the 2004 Lok Sabha election when EVMs were used for the first time in all 543 seats. Seeking answers from a different perspective, BJP MP Bansuri Swaraj and Shiv Sena (Shinde) MP Srikant Shinde wanted the Law Ministry to give an exact estimate of the jump expected in per capita GDP with simultaneous polls.

Key BJP ally Janata Dal (United) questioned the efficacy of the legislation in a multi-party polity such as India. According to sources, the party's national working president and Rajya Sabha member Sanjay K. Jha asked: "If a State government falls in three years, then as the legislation says, the new government will hold office only for the remainder of the five-year period. Doesn't this dilute the mandate of the new government which will only have a two-year term? Why would the voters take such a government seriously?"

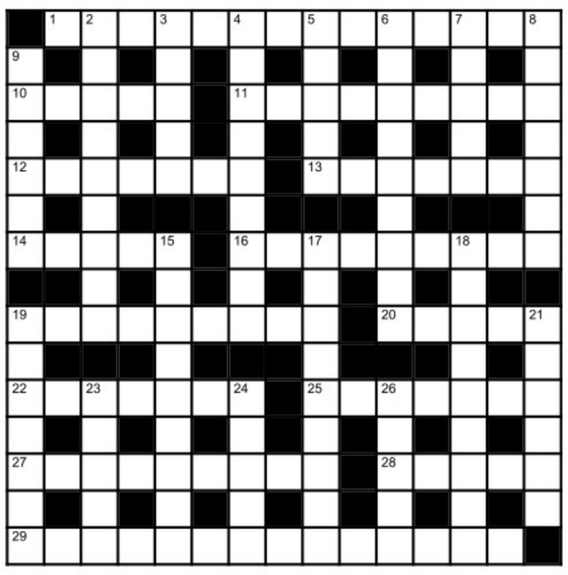
The Opposition members contested the justification that frequent elections lead to policy paralysis and delay decisions in the government.

TH CROSSWORD + 14378

(set by Arden)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site. @ *https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

1 Fantastic in space (3,2,4,5)
10 Top accommodation in a country revisited (5)
11 9 stores cater cut fruit (9)
12 Close to biting lip - A way to show displeasure (7)
13 Santa cross caught me making sour cream (7)
14 Controls - they're there inside (5)
16 Must maintain silence - finally becomes lifeless (9)
19 New tone, in case one is from Guangdong (9)
20 Close to painting in red paint (5)
22 Ventilates after a time delay (7)
25 State a subject in the beginning (7)
27 Work behind time with a singularly crazy boss... (3,6)
28 ...due to having no name (5)
29 Studies involving standard allocation for wars and conflicts (14)

Down

2 Subject of Britain and weather, one on one (9)
3 Play ball - it's essentially entertainment (5)
4 Fruit - Argentine bananas? (9)
5 Remove top of the metal, push in the centre of the bone (5)
6 Being evasive about leaving part outside frame (9)
7 Something to eat in Madurai, Tamilnadu (5)
8 Time to settle what the man reportedly consumed (3,4)
9 Break bread with the first guest who comes in Harry (6)
15 Brief season is what is needed still (9)
17 'In camera' arrangement - a Yankee objects (9)
18 "An homage to a Democrat" - speech follows (9)
19 Disorderly in accommodating all our tall leaders (7)
21 Spray box over empty garage (6)
23 After a brief sentence, jail to make one mellow (5)
24 Informed about left cant (5)
26 Firstly, does he often tie it around his waist? (5)

SUDOKU

		4		8	3			
	6	3	7					
			1			4	9	
1					8			
6	9						1	2
			5					8
	4	6			2			
					5	2	3	
			8	7		6		

No.SS6395 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to previous puzzle

A	R	M	E	N	I	A		P	R	O	B	I	T	Y
S		A		O		N		O		B		D		A
S	O	N	A	R		G	A	I	N	S	A	Y	E	R
I		T		M		E		S		T		L		R
G	R	I	S	A	I	L	L	E		I	G	L	O	O
N		C				D				N				W
	W	O	M	B		U	N	S	T	A	B	L	E	
		R		I		S		A		T		A		
	N	E	U	R	I	T	I	S		E	T	N	A	
T				D				K				C		H
A	M	A	S	S		G	U	A	T	E	M	A	L	A
N		R		N		R		T		V		S		R
D	E	S	P	E	R	A	D	O		E	X	T	O	L
E		O		S		C		O		N		E		E
M	A	N	A	T	E	E		N	O	S	T	R	U	M

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

3	5	8	1	2	9	4	6	7
4	1	6	5	7	3	2	9	8
2	9	7	6	8	4	5	1	3
7	8	1	9	4	5	3	2	6
6	2	5	7	3	1	9	8	4
9	3	4	8	6	2	7	5	1
8	6	2	4	5	7	1	3	9
5	7	9	3	1	8	6	4	2
1	4	3	2	9	6	8	7	5

FAITH

Andal shows the way

When Vishnu manifested as Varaha and rescued Bhoo Devi from the clutches of Hiranyaksha, She continues to remain sad and informed Varaha that as long as their children (mankind) remained imprisoned by the five *rakshasas* (five indriyas), they would never attain salvation. Perumal agrees with Her and points out that, specially in Kali Yuga, devotees would need far simpler but effective methods of reaching God. He suggests She appear on earth and guide them in an easy manner. She appeared as a divine child in Srivilliputtur in the Tamil month of Aadi under the Pooram star in Periazhwar's garden and showed devotees that heartfelt bhakti and prayer are enough to fetch His Mercy, said Damal S Ramakrishnan in a special discourse on D.V. Vasudevan, *The Hindu*'s Faith columnist, on his centenary year.

Periazhwar named her as Goda, with 'Go' referring to earth (since she came from it). 'Go' also refers to milch cows and she gave the milk of knowledge (gnana) to countless devotees.

As Goda, she was devoted to God and adorned herself with the garland made for Perumal before submitting it. When Periazhwar discovered this and put away the offering, a displeased God asked him to bring Him Andal's garland: Goda became Andal, as she had won over Perumal Himself with her devotion.

She disseminated gnana by the simple methodology of gathering together and singing His praise, chanting His name systematically, so that devotion became an organic practice and flourishing from within. Her Tiruppavai verses sung in the month of Margazhi show the way.

INBRIEF

GMR gets ₹6,300 cr. from from Abu Dhabi Investment

GMR Group received ₹6,300 crore investment from Abu Dhabi's sovereign wealth fund ADIA. The funds will help in reducing the debt of promoter group entity GMR Enterprises Pvt. Ltd. In October last year, the group said it secured ₹6,300 crore in debt funding from the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA). GMR Infra Enterprises Pvt. Ltd. (GIEPL) received the funds towards allotment of optionally convertible debentures on January 7, as per a filing. PTI

ONGC picks BP to boost Mumbai High output

Oil And Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) said it picked BP Exploration (Alpha) Ltd., wholly owned by BP Plc. of U.K., as the technical service provider (TSP) for its Mumbai High (MH) field. "The TSP will identify improvements in reservoir, facilities and wells to enhance production from the MH field," ONGC said in a filing. The TSP has indicated a 60% rise in oil and gas production from the baseline production level over a 10-year contract period, ONGC added.

Laxmi Dental sets IPO price band at ₹407-₹428 a share

Laxmi Dental Ltd. will tap the capital market with an initial public offering (IPO) in the price band of ₹407 to ₹428 per equity share of face value of ₹2 each. The B2C dental aligner company offers dental products like metal-free crowns, bridges and dentures. The issue will open on January 13 and close January 15. At the upper price band, the issue size is estimated at ₹698 crore. The firm proposes to use net proceeds towards servicing debt, among others.

Gold googly bamboozles import data

India's overall import bill for the first eight months of 2024-25, reckoned to have grown 8.35% at $486.73 bn, has been pared by almost 3% to $472.5 bn, as per DGCIS data; the dramatic revisions alarm economists and one calls it 'statistical harakiri'

Vikas Dhoot
NEW DELHI

In what may constitute the steepest revision in India's trade data in recent times, the Centre has revised India's import bill for November 2024 by almost six billion dollars to $63.86 billion from the record tally of $70 billion reported as quick estimates by the Commerce Ministry last month, led by a sharp $5 billion downward revision in gold imports.

In fact, India's overall import bill for the first eight months of 2024-25, which was reckoned to have grown 8.35% at $486.73 billion, has been pared by almost 3% to $472.5 billion, as per data uploaded on the website of the Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics (DGCIS) on Wednesday and reviewed by *The Hindu*. The dramatic revisions triggered alarm among economists, with one terming it as outright 'statistical harakiri'.

A bulk of this $14 billion drop in the year's cumulative goods import tally was linked to a revision in the gold import bill from $49.1 billion for April to November 2024, which marked a 49% spike from a year ago, to just $37.4 billion which reflects a mere 13.5% rise.

While gold imports accounted for $11.7 billion of the $14.2 billion revision in the year's import bill, silver imports accounted for another billion as they were recalibrated to $2.33 billion from $3.28 billion estimated as of December 16. The data revision implies India's trade deficit this year should be about $14 billion lower than estimated earlier. November's trade gap remains the worst on record but at around $31.8 billion, from the earlier estimate of $37.84 billion.

October's import bill has also been revised downward, but by a marginal $0.16 billion to $66.18 billion, which means it still marks India's highest import bill in a month.

Ajai Srivastava, director of the Global Trade Research Initiative, said the government must explain the rationale behind the revision to ensure India's economic data retains credibility among investors and financial markets.

Trade Math Shock

India's gold import bill for Nov. 2024 has been slashed by $5 billion and cumulative tally from April to November pared by a quarter

Imports (in $bn)	Original estimate	Revised estimate
Gold in Nov. 2024	14.86	9.9
Gold, April-Nov. 2024	49.1	37.39
Silver, April-Nov. 2024	3.28	2.33

Source: DGCIS, Ministry of Commerce and Industry

Interest rate cuts not a silver bullet to revive the economy: CII chief

Vikas Dhoot
NEW DELHI

There is no single silver bullet such as an interest rate cut that can address the economy's slowdown, and the upcoming Union Budget must revive India's slowing consumption impulses through multiple measures, including a cut in income taxes and fuel duties, and provide a reforms roadmap to bring growth back to the 7% level, India's apex industry body's head said.

Consumption has been somewhat subdued this year, but the healthy monsoon should boost rural incomes and easing food inflation will also provide some impetus to consumption through the rest of 2024-25, the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) president Sanjiv Puri told *The Hindu*.

Sanjiv Puri

The chairman and managing director of diversified conglomerate ITC Limited stressed that the industry is expecting an interest rate cut but it not a silver bullet that can solve the flagging consumption or growth trajectory.

Spur consumption

"A rate cut will provide some relief, as far as EMIs are concerned, and that also will help spur consumption and certain sectors may directly benefit of it, where purchases are taken through a loan.

"That will help progressively improve consumption, and with these factors panning out, I think, maybe in a couple of quarters, we should start seeing some better trends," Mr. Puri averred.

While the CII chief indicated the need to decouple monetary policy from food inflation that is more related to weather vagaries, he said this needs to be tackled by building resilience in agriculture.

"That is important, because when food inflation becomes sticky... in the middle class, you will find that it has a material weightage in their minds, and therefore impacts consumption also," he said in a very nuanced assessment.

RBI lifts curbs on Chennai lender Asirvad Micro Finance

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Wednesday lifted the supervisory restrictions imposed on Chennai-based Asirvad Micro Finance Ltd., and Delhi-based DMI Finance Private Ltd. with immediate effect.

On October 17, 2024, the RBI had directed these entities to cease and desist from sanction and disbursal of loans, effective after October 21.

Later, the firms initiated remedial action and submitted compliances to the RBI, the central bank said.

SEBI pulls up Ola Electric for lapses on disclosures

Reuters

India's markets regulator warned Ola Electric against sharing company information on social media before disclosing it to investors, adding to a slew of problems for the electric two-wheeler maker.

The letter from the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), disclosed by Ola Electric on Tuesday, said the company failed provide "equal and timely access" to investors of information about a planned store expansion.

In December, Ola Electric founder, Bhavish Aggarwal, shared news about new store openings in a post on social media platform X and to investors about four hours later through stock exchanges.

Publicly-listed companies are required to disclose any information first to investors through exchange filings and not more than 12 hours after the event takes place.

"The above violations have been viewed very seriously. You are hereby warned," SEBI said.

Ola Electric, which went public in August 2024, opened 3,200 stores and service centres last month to expand its reach and address increasing number of complaints regarding its service standards. The letter is the latest such regulatory scrutiny of the company following a government agency's investigation into its service standards.

The issues have cast a shadow on Ola's stellar listing, which saw its shares double in value in less than a week. It has also lost market share to rivals TVS Motor and Bajaj Auto's 'Chetak' e-scooters.

READ
FRONTLINE
LEADING THE DEBATE SINCE 1984
EVERY FORTNIGHT.
TO SUBSCRIBE, VISIT
www.thehindugroup.in/subscribe

KERALA WATER AUTHORITY e-Tender Notice

Tender No : 22 to 26,28,29,32 Jal Jeevan mission -Idukki district-Construction of 25 MLD WTP, RCC OHSR , steel tanks and sump cum pump houses, Well cum pump house, Supply and Laying of various CWPM,CWGM,RWPM, supplying and erecting Raw water and clear water pump sets and transformers at various pump houses providing Power connection and electrification works and improvement work of Kalthotty sump cum pump house, and existing booster pump houses in, **EMD** : Rs. 200000 to 500000, **Tender fee** : Rs. 11025 to16540, **Last Date for submitting Tender** : 04-02-2025 04:00:pm, **Phone** : 0486-2291282
Website : **www.kwa.kerala.gov.in, www.etenders.kerala.gov.in**
Superintending Engineer, PH Circle Office, Idukki
KWA-JB-GL-6-1023-2024-25

RAJASTHAN STATE HIGHWAYS AUTHORITY, JAIPUR
GOVERNMENT OF RAJASTHAN

No. 1587 Date: 31/12/24

NIT No. 41/2024-25
INVITATION OF BIDS

Bids for "Selection of Agency for Providing Manpower to Collect User Fee at toll plaza(s) along with Incident Management situated on various project roads developed by RSHA in the State of Rajasthan" are invited from interested bidders upto 18:00 PM on 09.01.2025. The technical proposal shall be opened on 10.01.2025 at 11:30 Hrs. The estimated cost of the work shall be Rs. 13,34,89,236/-.

Other particulars of bid may be visited on the procurement portal (http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, https://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in) of the state.

UBN No: PWD2425SLOB12868

(Akshaya Kumar Jain)
Member (Conc. & PPP), RSHA, Jaipur
DIPR/C/254/2025

THE HINDU GROUP
Presents
THE HINDU LIT FOR LIFE 2025
THE SHARPEST LITERATURE FESTIVAL IN INDIA
In association with CHRIST

LITERARY TRIVIA CHALLENGE

1. Best known for setting up the Madras Crocodile Bank Trust, this herpetologist's biography is called Snakes, Drugs and Rock 'n' Roll. Who are we talking about?
2. Which Indian author is often referred to as the "Dan Brown of India"?
3. Which bird does the seafarer kill in the Rime of Ancient Mariner by Samuel Coleridge?

*T&C apply.

Scan QR code or visit
newsth.live/LFL2025QZ
take the quiz. Top 3 winners* every day win gift vouchers.

Answer to yesterday's quiz:
1. Kamal Haasan | 2. The Covenant of Water; Dr. Abraham Verghese
3. The French Revolution

Yesterday's Winners:
1. Nagendra Kumar, Chennai | 2. Madhuri M, Chennai | 3. Anuj K, Bangalore

Preventing Cervical Cancer:
The Critical Role of Screening and Vaccination

Cervical cancer, primarily caused by persistent infection with high-risk types of the human papillomavirus (HPV), is the second most common cancer among Indian women, claiming nearly 80,000 lives annually (Globocan 2022). Despite these statistics, cervical cancer is largely preventable through regular screening and vaccination.

What Causes Cervical Cancer?

Cervical cancer is a growth of cells that starts in the cervix, the lower part of the uterus connecting to the vaginal canal. Most cases are caused by HPV, a common infection transmitted through sexual contact. While the immune system often clears HPV naturally, in some individuals, the virus persists, leading to precancerous changes in cervical cells that can develop into cancer over time. Regular screening and HPV vaccination significantly reduce the risk of cervical cancer.

"If cervical cancer is diagnosed at an early stage (Stage I), the 5-year survival rate in India improves significantly to approximately 85%."
Dr K S Bindhu
Senior Consultant - Obstetrics & Gynaecology, Apollo Hospitals, Navi Mumbai

The Power of Prevention: Screenings and Vaccination

Cervical cancer progresses slowly, providing a window for early detection and treatment. Screening and vaccination are critical in preventing advanced disease.

1. Screening Tests:

• Pap Smear: Detects precancerous changes in the cervix, enabling early treatment. Recommended every three years for women aged 21–65.
• HPV DNA Test: Identifies high-risk HPV strains and complements pap smears, especially for women 30 and older. When combined with a pap smear, it can be done every five years.

2. Vaccination:

HPV vaccines offer proactive protection against cervical cancer's primary cause.

• Target Age Group: Vaccination is most effective between ages 9 and 14, for both boys and girls, before sexual activity begins.
• Catch-Up Vaccination: Women up to age 45 can benefit, though effectiveness may decrease after HPV exposure.

Vaccination covers high-risk HPV types linked to cervical cancer, significantly reducing the likelihood of precancerous changes.

Failing to undergo regular screening can lead to late-stage diagnosis, when treatment options are limited. Advanced cervical cancer often spreads to nearby organs like the bladder and rectum or other distant areas, resulting in severe complications and a high mortality rate – underscoring the importance of early detection.

Symptoms of Advanced Disease

Early-stage cervical cancer is usually asymptomatic, highlighting the need for regular screening. Advanced disease may cause:

• Abnormal vaginal bleeding (bleeding between periods, after intercourse, or after menopause)
• Malodorous or unusual vaginal discharge
• Pelvic pain or pain during intercourse

Lifestyle Choices Matter

While screening and vaccination are the most effective measures, certain lifestyle changes further reduce risk:

• Avoiding Tobacco: Smoking damages the DNA in cervical cells, which can lead to mutations that trigger cancer. It also weakens the immune system, making it harder to fight HPV infections.
• Safe Sexual Practices: Barrier methods (like condoms) lower HPV transmission risk.
• Maintaining Hygiene: Good personal hygiene helps reduce the likelihood of infections that may exacerbate HPV-related risks.

Early Detection Saves Lives

Cervical cancer is preventable, treatable, and curable when detected early. Regular pap smears, HPV DNA testing, and vaccination form a robust defence. Even vaccinated women must continue routine screenings, as vaccines don't cover all HPV strains. Timely action through screening and vaccination saves lives.

Apollo ProHealth PRESENTS
Sincerely, Your Doctor
IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE HINDU

A preventive healthcare initiative by Apollo ProHealth and The Hindu

Have questions for our doctors?
WhatsApp us at 89392 83283
or email us at sincerelyyourdoctor@thehindu.co.in

MARKETS

MARKET WATCH

	WEDNESDAY	% CHANGE
Sensex	78,148	-0.06
US Dollar	85.91	-0.19
Gold	80,000	0.37
Brent oil	76.17	-0.82

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Enter	2515.25	-5.30
Adani Ports	1152.30	-21.70
Apollo Hosp	7142.65	-294.10
Asian Paints	2334.35	41.75
Axis Bank	1074.95	7.45
Bajaj Auto	8642.25	-168.05
Bajaj Finserv	1697.00	14.25
Bajaj Finance	7355.40	1.45
Bharat Elec	282.10	-4.90
Bharti Airtel	1599.20	8.35
BPCL	286.80	4.00
Britannia Ind	4859.90	27.65
Cipla	1494.90	-2.55
Coal India	380.35	0.55
Dr Reddys Lab	1370.75	19.20
Eicher Motors	5163.20	-14.10
Grasim Ind	2435.75	-31.50
HCL Tech	1932.25	16.35
HDFC Bank	1694.30	-19.10
HDFC Life	618.00	-1.85
Hero MotoCorp	4138.10	-23.95
Hindalco	586.65	2.15
Hind Unilever	2401.00	10.20
ICICI Bank	1263.75	-15.50
IndusInd Bank	981.05	-2.55
Infosys	1933.15	2.30
ITC	449.55	8.45
JSW Steel	902.30	-9.50
Kotak Bank	1768.65	-3.40
L&T	3596.35	-46.95
M&M	3086.10	-22.75
Maruti Suzuki	11822.00	100.70
NestleIndia	2219.90	7.25
NTPC	325.40	-3.20
ONGC	271.33	7.84
PowerGrid Corp	306.65	1.60
Reliance Ind	1265.50	24.65
SBI Life	1463.15	-14.60
State Bank	771.15	-7.60
Shriram Finance Ltd.	2898.75	-59.65
Sun Pharma	1837.75	-15.65
TataConsumerProduct	961.60	6.60
Tata Motors	794.95	1.70
Tata Steel	132.64	-0.74
TCS	4108.40	80.10
Tech Mahindra	1663.75	-7.40
Titan	3484.05	-21.05
Trent Ltd.	6699.10	-175.20
UltraTech Cement	11403.55	-215.00
Wipro	297.55	3.50

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on January 08

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	85.65	85.97
Euro	88.14	88.48
British Pound	105.80	106.21
Japanese Yen (100)	54.07	54.27
Chinese Yuan	11.68	11.73
Swiss Franc	93.87	94.22
Singapore Dollar	62.51	62.76
Canadian Dollar	59.53	59.75
Malaysian Ringitt	19.01	19.10
Australian Dollar	53.07	53.27

Source:Indian Bank

VIENNA

Austria's Foreign Minister to take over as its caretaker Chancellor

REUTERS

Austria's Foreign Minister Alexander Schallenberg will take over as caretaker Chancellor from Friday, as the far-right seeks to form a government with the conservatives. Wednesday's statement came after conservative Karl Nehammer said over the weekend he would step down as Chancellor and party chairman. AFP

LHASA

Rescuers search for survivors after quake in Tibet kills 126

AFP

Thousands of rescuers were searching for survivors in freezing conditions on Wednesday after a devastating earthquake in China's remote Tibet region killed at least 126 people. Officials said on Wednesday that there had been no increases in the number of people killed or injured since the last update on Tuesday night. AFP

TAMMUN

Two children among three killed in Israeli strike in the West Bank

AFP

Palestinian officials said three persons including two children were killed on Wednesday in an Israeli air strike on the occupied West Bank which the military said targeted militants. Officials said Israeli forces took the bodies of the three Palestinians "and officially informed us through coordination that they have" them. AFP

KYIV

Ukraine strikes oil depot that serves Russian nuclear bombers

AP

Ukraine launched an overnight strike deep inside Russia that set fire to an oil depot in the city of Engels that serves an air base for Russian nuclear bomber planes, the Ukrainian military said on Wednesday. The Governor of the Russian region said Engels and Saratov had been subject to a "mass drone attack". REUTERS

Homes destroyed, thousands flee as wildfires tear through Los Angeles

Two killed, 70,000 face evacuation orders while 28,000 structures under threat; flames race towards neighbourhoods home to California's rich and famous; Vice-President Kamala Harris's home among those that fall under evacuation zones

Associated Press
LOS ANGELES

Fire fury: A home engulfed in flames during the Eaton fire in the Altadena area of Los Angeles in California on Wednesday. AFP

Multiple massive wildfires tore across the Los Angeles area with devastating force on Wednesday, destroying more than 1,000 structures and killing at least two persons as desperate residents escaped through flames, ferocious winds and towering clouds of smoke.

Three major blazes were burning in the metropolitan area, from the Pacific Coast inland to Pasadena, home of the famed Rose Parade. With thousands of firefighters already attacking the flames, the Los Angeles Fire Department put out a plea for off-duty firefighters to help, and weather conditions were too windy for firefighting aircraft to fly, further hampering the fight. Fire officials hoped to get the flights up later Wednesday.

In addition to the two deaths, Los Angeles County Fire Chief Anthony Marrone said many others were hurt in the fires, which threatened at least 28,000 structures.

At least 70,000 people were ordered to evacuate, officials said. The flames marched toward highly populated and affluent neighborhoods home to California's rich and famous. Hollywood stars, including Mark Hamill, Mandy Moore and James Woods, were among those forced to flee.

The home of Vice President Kamala Harris was included in an evacuation zone, although no one was there, according to a spokesperson.

California's wildfire season typically begins in June or July and runs through October, according to the Western Fire Chiefs Association, but January wildfires are not unprecedented.

The season is beginning earlier and ending later due to rising temperatures and decreased rainfall tied to climate change, according to recent data. Rains that usually end fire season are often delayed, meaning fires can burn through the winter months, the association said.

Recent dry winds have contributed to warmer-than-average temperatures in Southern California, where there's been very little rain so far this season. Southern California hasn't seen more than 0.25 cm of rain since early May.

India's Misri meets Taliban's Foreign Minister in Dubai

Kallol Bhattacherjee
NEW DELHI

Common interests: Vikram Misri meets Afghanistan Acting Foreign Minister Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttaqi in Dubai on Wednesday. ANI

Marking the highest outreach with Afghanistan's Taliban regime, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri on Wednesday met with the Taliban's Foreign Minister Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttaqi, in the UAE. In a meeting that took place in Dubai, the two sides agreed to promote the use of the Iranian port of Chabahar for trade with the Indian delegation, saying that India would provide "further material support" for Afghanistan in areas such as refugee rehabilitation and health.

"In response to the request from the Afghan side, India will provide further material support in the first instance to the health sector and for the rehabilitation of refugees.

Support for trade

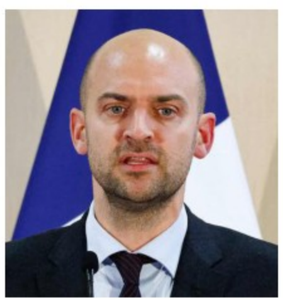
"It was also agreed to promote the use of the Chabahar port for supporting trade and commercial activities, including for the purpose of humanitarian assistance for Afghanistan," the MEA said.

The two sides also discussed strengthening of sports (cricket) cooperation," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said after the meeting in Dubai.

Significantly, the meeting between Mr. Misri and Muttaqi comes days after India "unequivocally condemned" the bombing of Afghanistan's territories by Pakistan between December 24 and 25.

France asks Europe to brace itself against Musk's interference

Agence France-Presse
PARIS



Jean-Noel Barrot

France on Wednesday urged the European Commission to protect its member states with "the greatest firmness" against interference in political debate particularly from the billionaire owner of social media platform X, Elon Musk.

"Either the European Commission applies with the greatest firmness the laws that we have given ourselves to protect our public space, or it does not do so and then it will have to agree to give back the capacity to do so to the EU member states," Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot told France Inter radio. "We have to wake up," he said.

Asked whether X could be banned in Europe, Mr. Barrot replied that such a mechanism to close a platform "is laid out in our laws".

Mr. Musk, who has unprecedented influence thanks to his proximity to U.S. President-elect Donald Trump, is set for a role in Mr. Trump's administration.

"When you take part in a government or aspire to take part in one, your opinions have a rather special value," Mr. Barrot said.

Yoon's lawyers slam efforts to detain impeached President

Associated Press
SEOUL

Officials warn they could arrest members of the security staff who prevent arrest

Lawyers for impeached South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol denounced efforts to detain him over his short-lived imposition of martial law, while the country's acting leader, Deputy Prime Minister Choi Sang-mok, expressed concern on Wednesday over a possible clash between law enforcement agents and presidential security personnel.

As anti-corruption officials and police prepared another attempt to detain Mr. Yoon following last week's failed effort, the presidential security service fortified Mr. Yoon's compound with barbed wire and rows of tightly placed vehicles blocking the path to his residence.

The Corruption Investigation Office for High-Ranking Officials and police say they will make a more forceful effort to detain Mr. Yoon, warning that they could arrest members of the presidential security staff.

The office has been seeking Mr. Yoon's detention since he repeatedly ignored summons for questioning about whether his brief power grab on Dec. 3 constituted rebellion.

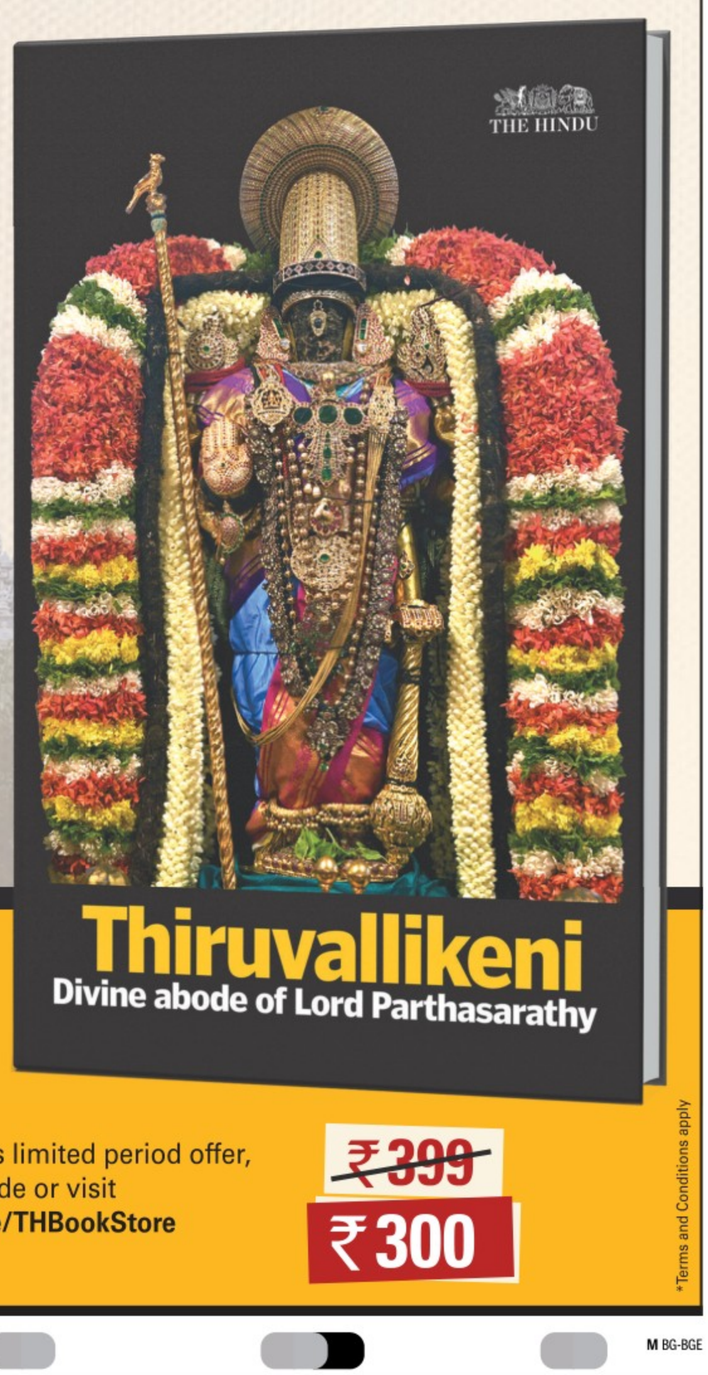
The opposition Democratic Party accused his lawyers of attempting to stall the process and urged theagency to swiftly execute the warrant.

THE HINDU GROUP

A SPECIAL PUBLICATION FROM THE HINDU GROUP

This book has articles on puranic accounts about the Thiruvallikeni temple, inscriptions, the temple under the East India Company and mutts in Thiruvallikeni. Beautiful pictures make the book a visual treat as well.

LAUNCHING SHORTLY



PRE-BOOK
YOUR COPY ONLINE

To avail this limited period offer, scan QR code or visit
newsth.live/THBookStore

~~₹399~~
₹300

*Terms and Conditions apply

Trump asks Supreme Court to block his sentencing

Agence France-Presse
NEW YORK

Donald Trump asked the Supreme Court to block his sentencing this week for covering up hush money payments to a porn star while he appeals his conviction. Mr. Trump made the eleventh-hour plea for a suspension of the criminal proceedings after a New York State appeals court dismissed his effort to have the hearing delayed. He is scheduled to be sentenced on Friday.

Denmark is 'open to dialogue' with U.S., says Foreign Minister

Agence France-Presse
COPENHAGEN

Lars Lokke Rasmussen

Denmark is open to talks with the United States to safeguard U.S. interests in the Arctic, after U.S. President-elect Donald Trump refused to rule out military action to take Greenland, the country's Foreign Minister said Wednesday.

Mr. Trump refused to rule out military intervention over the Panama Canal and Greenland.

Mr. Trump's comments came as his son Donald Trump Jr. made a private visit to the Arctic island that is an autonomous Danish territory.

Danish Foreign Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen told reporters that the Danish Realm – which includes Denmark, Greenland and the Faroe Islands – is "open to a dialogue with the Americans to ensure that American ambitions are fulfilled."

Mr. Lokke Rasmussen noted that the U.S. and NATO had "legitimate" interests in the region because of international events."In conjunction with the melting of the Arctic and new shipping lanes opening up, we are unfortunately also seeing an increase in great power rivalry. We see a Russia that is arming itself. We see a China that is also starting to take an interest," he said. The top diplomat urged calm amid the new frenzy.

RETROSPECT

Konstas regrets the Sydney stand-off with Bumrah

GETTY IMAGES

Sam Konstas regrets his involvement in the stand-off with Jasprit Bumrah during the Border-Gavaskar Trophy. "If that happened again, maybe I wouldn't have said anything," he said. He talked about how he handled the shoulder-barge incident with Virat Kohli. "I had a little chat after the game telling him that I idolise him".

APPRAISAL DONE

SCG gets 'satisfactory' rating while others receive 'very good' grade

AFP

Four out of five pitches used in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy series have been rated 'very good' by the ICC, which found the track for the fifth and final game in Sydney to be 'satisfactory'. In 2023, the ICC revamped its pitch rating system, reducing it from six categories to four – very good, satisfactory, unsatisfactory and unfit.

CLEAR VISION

Kohli always super motivated and he'll know what to do: du Plessis

AFP

Virat Kohli will be "super motivated" to put a struggling phase behind him, said Faf du Plessis on Wednesday. "I know someone like him is super motivated, he's gone through it all before, so he knows exactly what to do," du Plessis told *PTI*. He also added retirement is a "very very personal" decision for a player.

TOP STUFF

Bumrah continues to remain No. 1 in Test rankings

GETTY IMAGES

India's pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah continued to reign supreme at the top of the bowlers' chart with a career-best rating of 908 in the latest ICC Test Rankings, released on Wednesday. Left-arm spinner Ravindra Jadeja, who climbed a spot to be joint ninth, is the other Indian giving Bumrah company in the top-10.

Hockey India League increases prize money

Y.B. Sarangi
ROURKELA

The prize money has increased noticeably for the ongoing edition of the Hockey India League.

As per an announcement on Wednesday, the winner of the men's competition, featuring eight teams, will pocket ₹3 crore. The runner-up and third place finisher will earn ₹2 crore and ₹1 crore respectively.

In the previous edition in 2017, the winning team, Kalinga Lancers, had bagged ₹2.5 crore. The runner-up, Dabang Mumbai, had claimed ₹1.25 crore, while the third-placed Uttar Pradesh Wizards had got ₹75 lakh.

In the inaugural women's competition, set to kick off in Ranchi on Sunday with four teams, the winning side will secure ₹1.5 crore. The second and third placed teams will get ₹1.5 crore and ₹50 lakh respectively. There is partial pay parity for men and women as far as individual awards are concerned.

Hero MotoCorp, the league's title sponsor, has announced that the player-of-the-match in both men's and women's matches will receive ₹50,000 each. The player-of-the-tournament will receive ₹20 lakh each.

Best goalkeeper, up-and-coming player and top scorer in the men's section will receive ₹10 lakh each. In the women's section, best goalkeeper, up-and-coming player and top scorer will be awarded ₹5 lakh each.

Altogether, HIL 2024-25 will distribute ₹10 crore as prize money in comparison to about ₹6 crore in 2017.

The propeller: Janssen's heroics proved the difference in a humdinger against Gonasika. HIL

Janssen and Dragons steal the limelight

The Dutch drag-flicker stars with a hat-trick as the team pips Gonasika and climbs to second in the table; Toofans blow away fancied Rudras

HIL

Y.B. Sarangi
ROURKELA

In a gripping goal-fest, Dutch drag-flicker Jip Janssen performed a hat-trick to guide Tamil Nadu Dragons to a 6-5 win over Team Gonasika in the Hockey India League at the Birsa Munda Hockey Stadium here on Wednesday.

Dragons' second outright win took them to the second spot.

Gonasika, relying on their short passing, made early inroads through Araijeet Singh Hundal's double strike. Araijeet launched a diagonal grounder from the edge of the circle and then tapped in a cross from Timothee Clement, who defied two defenders and barely maintained his balance to pass it from the goal-line. Dragons clawed back slowly. At the stroke of the first break, Janssen's beautiful variation was deflected in by Abharan Sudev.

Early in the second quarter, Dragons earned three short corners and Janssen sounded the boards to restore parity. Man-to-man marking denied Gonasika free movement and helped Dragons share the honours at half-time.

Janssen put Dragons in the lead by converting a penalty corner early in the second half.

Gonasika bounced back well. After Tim Howard's shot off a short corner hit the crossbar, Nikkin Thimmaiah deflected in to make it 3-3. Struan Walker's short corner conversion restored Gonasika's lead.

Dragons again showed their set-piece excellence and Janssen surprised Oliver Payne with another penalty corner variation.

Dragons went ahead through Nathan Ephraums' strike before Clement drew level. Karthi Selvam scored the winner, the fourth goal of the action-packed fourth quarter, a minute before the hooter, in the 11-goal nail-biter.

In the second match, bottom-placed Hyderabad Toofans upset UP Rudras 3-0 to record its first victory in regulation time.

First hat-trick

Kalinga Lancers' Thierry Brinkman was credited with the first hat-trick of this edition after a goal, originally awarded to Briton Nicholas Bandurak, against Shrachi Rarh Bengal Tigers was credited to the Dutchman a day later.

The results: Tamil Nadu Dragons 6 (Sudev 15, Janssen 19, 33, 50, Ephramus 55, Karthi 59) bt Team Gonasika 5 (Araijeet 5, 7, Nikkin 39, Walker 43, Clement 58); Hyderabad Toofans 3 (Wallace 6, Rajinder 14, Shilanand 32) bt UP Rudras 0.

AFI does away with national camps, ratifies decentralisation of training

Uthra Ganesan
NEW DELHI

The Athletics Federation of India has officially moved to decentralise its training camps, doing away with the earlier system of national camps which allows athletes the freedom to train on their own at a centre of their choice.

The decision was ratified after its two-day AGM concluded in Chandigarh on Wednesday. The plan had been devised in 2024 itself and was to be executed after the Paris Olympics.

The Hindu had first reported on it in June last year during the Inter-State Championships.

"We have given the athletes the liberty to train at their preferred centres – Army Sports Institute, Reliance, JSW, Tamil Nadu and Odisha government all have their own training facilities with foreign coaches," outgoing AFI president Adille Sumariwalla said on Wednesday.

> We will have certain foreign coaches in certain centres and athletes who wish to train with them can go to those centres
>
> **SUMARIWALLA**
> AFI spokesperson

Sumariwalla will continue to be the official spokesperson for the federation.

"Only the 400m sprinters will train together at the Trivandrum SAI-National Centre of Excellence because they will also be part of the relay teams and our policy of not including outsiders in relays continues. But there is no disbanding of any team. Those who have agreed to train at Trivandrum are welcome. What we had said earlier was that athletes who are not happy with some of the coaches can leave and we will be including fresh talent," he added.

As per reports, National 400m record holder Muhammad Anas is among those who have decided to train separately and will no longer be part of the relay team going forward.

Sumariwalla also explained the process behind training with foreign coaches. "We will give athletes' names to the NCOEs on the basis of their preference. We will have certain foreign coaches in certain centres and athletes who wish to train with them can go to those centres. We have also formulated guidelines on how all athletes will have to come to camps for the last eight weeks before major international competitions," he said.

He also said that the AFI was looking at indoor competitions at the newly built stadium in Bhubaneswar and admitted that the federation was prepared for tougher times keeping track of athletes across the country.

Monitoring team

"We have set up a separate, exclusive monitoring team for all the places where we will have top athletes training and share the data with NADA. It's tough but it will help widen the athlete base in the long run".

Guptill. FILE PHOTO

Guptill retires from international cricket

Press Trust of India
AUCKLAND

New Zealand batter Martin Guptill on Wednesday announced his retirement from international cricket, though the 38-year-old will continue to play in the T20 leagues around the world.

"As a young kid it was always my dream to play for New Zealand and I feel incredibly lucky and proud to have played 367 games for my country," Guptill said in a statement issued by New Zealand Cricket.

"I will forever cherish the memories made wearing the silver fern alongside a great group of guys," he added.

Guptill has played 47 Tests but the white-ball format was his calling card. He scored 7346 runs from 198 matches with 18 hundreds and 39 fifties.

Guptill also appeared in 122 T20Is for the Black Caps, making 3531 runs with two hundreds and 20 fifties.

Alcaraz, Sinner will challenge a determined Djokovic

AUSTRALIAN OPEN

Agence France-Presse
MELBOURNE

Novak Djokovic returns to the scene of his greatest triumphs this week at the Australian Open, adamant he is ready and able to see off the challenge from Jannik Sinner and Carlos Alcaraz in his pursuit of a record 25th Grand Slam crown.

Chinks in the armour of the 37-year-old former World No. 1 were exposed last year when he failed to clinch a Major title for the first time since 2017, although he did win Olympic gold.

The Serb's fallibility was again on show when he was bundled out of the Brisbane International last week in the quarterfinals by American Reilly Opelka.

But with fellow great Rafael Nadal joining Roger Federer in retirement, Djokovic is fired up to prove he still has what it takes against the young brigade.

Djokovic has brought in former rival Andy Murray as coach in an eye-catching move that he hopes will give him a winning edge.

Djokovic's stamina and skill will be put to the ultimate test against World No. 1 and defending champion Sinner, just 23, and Alcaraz, already a four-time Slam winner at 21.

While Djokovic warmed up in Brisbane, Italy's Sinner and Spaniard Alcaraz opted against any competitive action with exhibition matches in Melbourne this week their main preparation.

Sinner won his maiden Slam in Australia last year, battling back from two sets down to beat Russia's Daniil Medvedev.

Point to prove: Djokovic's stamina and skill will be put to the ultimate test. AFP

The seedings

Men: 1. Jannik Sinner, 2. Alexander Zverev, 3. Carlos Alcaraz, 4. Taylor Fritz, 5. Daniil Medvedev, 6. Casper Ruud, 7. Novak Djokovic, 8. Alex de Minaur, 9. Andrey Rublev, 10. Grigor Dimitrov, 11. Stefanos Tsitsipas, 12. Tommy Paul, 13. Holger Rune, 14. Ugo Humbert, 15. Jack Draper, 16. Lorenzo Musetti, 17. Frances Tiafoe, 18. Hubert Hurkacz, 19. Karen Khachanov, 20. Arthur Fils, 21. Ben Shelton, 22. Sebastian Korda, 23. Alejandro Tabilo, 24. Jiri Lehecka, 25. Alexei Popyrin, 26. Tomas Machac, 27. Jordan Thompson, 28. Sebastian Baez, 29. Felix Auger-Aliassime, 30 Giovanni Mpetshi Perricard, 31. Francisco Cerundolo, 32. Flavio Cobolli.
Women: 1. Aryna Sabalenka, 2. Iga Swiatek, 3. Coco Gauff, 4. Jasmine Paolini, 5. Zheng Qinwen, 6. Elena Rybakina, 7. Jessica Pegula, 8. Emma Navarro, 9. Daria Kasatkina, 10. Danielle Collins, 11. Paula Badosa, 12. Diana Shnaider, 13. Anna Kalinskaya, 14. Mirra Andreeva, 15. Beatriz Haddad Maia, 16. Jelena Ostapenko, 17. Marta Kostyuk, 18. Donna Vekic, 19. Madison Keys, 20. Karolina Muchova, 21. Victoria Azarenka, 22. Katie Boulter, 23, Magdalena Frech, 24. Yulia Putintseva, 25. Liudmila Samsonova, 26. Ekaterina Alexandrova, 27. Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova, 28. Elina Svitolina, 29. Linda Noskova, 30. Leylah Fernandez, 31. Maria Sakkari, 32. Dayana Yastremska.

Alcaraz won Wimbledon and the French Open last season to cement his status as the future of the game, along with Sinner.

But he has yet to perform to his full potential in Australia, with a quarterfinal appearance in 2024 – where he was stunned by Alexander Zverev – his best effort.

Local fans will give strong backing to Alex de Minaur, the world number eight, and showman Nick Kyrgios, who made his long-awaited comeback in Brisbane last week after a lengthy injury layoff.

Kyrgios was knocked out in the first round and admitted he would "almost need a miracle" for his wrist to hold up through five sets.

On Wednesday he pulled out of an exhibition match against Djokovic with an abdominal strain, casting fresh doubt on his fitness.

The Australian Open gets under way on Sunday.

Indians have a good day as Prannoy and Malvika enter pre-quarterfinals

BADMINTON

Press Trust of India
KUALA LUMPUR

India's H.S. Prannoy and Malvika Bansod advanced to the pre-quarterfinals of the Malaysia Open after winning their men's and women's singles opening round matches here on Wednesday.

More delight

There was more delight for the Indian camp with the pairs of Tanisha Crasto and Dhruv Kapila, and Sathish Kumar Karunakaran and Aadya Variyath sailing into the mixed doubles pre-quarterfinals of the Super 1000 meet.

Overcoming a delay caused by water leaking from the roof, Prannoy eliminated his Canadian rival Brian Yang 21-12, 17-21, 21-15.

Clinical: Malvika was hardly troubled by Jin Wei, breezing home in straight games. FILE PHOTO: SANDEEP SAXENA

Despite conceding the second game, Prannoy maintained composure to seal the decider in a match lasting one-hour 29 minutes. Malvika breezed past local favourite Goh Jin Wei 21-15, 21-16 in just 45 minutes.

In other Indian results, Kapila and Crasto defeated South Korea's Sung Hyun Ko and Hye Won Eom 21-13, 21-14.

In women's doubles, Rutaparna and Swetaparna Panda lost to Thailand's Benyapa and Nuntakarn Aimsaard 17-21, 10-21.

The results (first round):
Men: H.S. Prannoy bt Brian Yang (Can) 21-12, 17-21, 21-15; Shi Feng Li (Chn) bt Priyanshu Rajawat 21-11, 21-16.
Doubles: Chirag Shetty & Satwiksairaj Rankireddy bt K. Tang & M.C. Lu (Tpe) 21-10, 16-21, 21-5.
Women: Malvika Bansod bt Goh Jin Wei (Mas) 21-15, 21-16.
Doubles: Benyapa & Nuntakarn Aimsaard (Tha) bt Rutaparna & Swetaparna Panda 21-17, 21-10.
Mixed doubles: Dhruv Kapila & Tanisha Crasto bt Sung Hyun Ko & Hye Won (Kor) 21-13, 21-14; Sathish Kumar Karunakaran & Aadya Variyath bt Ashith Surya & Amrutha Pramuthesh 21-13, 21-15.

INBRIEF

Younis named Afghanistan's mentor for Champions Trophy

Afghanistan Cricket Board (ACB) on Wednesday appointed former Pakistan cricketer Younis Khan as the mentor for the Afghan national team for the upcoming Champions Trophy 2025, starting on February 19.According to a release from ACB, the former cricketer will accompany Afghanistan during its conditioning and preparation camp in Pakistan, offering his mentorship services until the conclusion of the ICC tournament.

Kavya's knock propels Gujarat against Tamil Nadu

Kavya Patel's unbeaten half-century (57 n.o., 167b, 7x4) propelled Gujarat to 380 in its first innings against Tamil Nadu on day two of the men's under-19 Cooch Behar trophy final in Ahmedabad on Wednesday. TN ended the day at 75 for two.

The scores: Gujarat 380 in 136.3 overs (Kavya Patel 57 n.o., R. Pravin 3/79) vs Tamil Nadu 75/2 in 41 overs (S. Shrenik 37).

Hyderabad FC holds FC Goa in the ISL

Allan Paulista's last-gasp strike in injury time ((90+2) helped former champion Hyderabad FC share points with FC Goa at the Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in Fatorda on Wednesday. The host had gone ahead through its Albanian star Armando Sadiku in the 52nd minute.

Spa to host F1 races in 2026, 2027, 2029 and 2031

Formula One has extended its contract with the Belgian Grand Prix, but one of the sport's most established races is set to be dropped from the schedule in 2028 and 2030. The extension, starting from next year, includes races only in 2026, 2027, 2029 and 2031, F1 said. The alternate venue for 2028 and 2030 is yet to be confirmed.

Saturday's Kolkata ISL derby shifted to Guwahati

Defending Shield winner Mohun Bagan Super Giant on Wednesday confirmed that its January 11 return-leg Indian Super League derby against East Bengal has been moved to Guwahati owing to inadequate security arrangements. "Saturday blockbuster 'Boro Match' will now be played at Guwahati. See you, Mariners," MBSG posted on X. The change in venue comes after the Bidhannagar Police, under whose jurisdiction the Salta Lake Stadium falls, cited concerns over inadequate security because of the Gangasagar Mela from January 10 to 18.

Hyderabad races for Jan. 13 advanced to Jan. 12

The Stewards of Hyderabad Race Club, have resolved to advance the Hyderabad races scheduled to be held on Monday (Jan. 13) to Sunday (Jan. 12), due to administrative reasons.

West Ham United sacks head coach Julen Lopetegui

West Ham United has sacked head coach Julen Lopetegui, the Premier League club said on Wednesday, with the London side 14th in the standings after 20 matches. "The first half of the 2024-25 season has not aligned with the club's ambitions and the club has therefore taken action in line with its objectives," West Ham said in a statement.

LIVE TELECAST

Badminton: Malaysia Open, Sports 18-1 & Hotstar, 6.30 a.m.
ISL: Sports 18-3 & JioCinema, 7.30 p.m.
HIL: DD Sports, Sony Sports Ten 1, 2, 3 & LIV, 8.15 p.m.

Presence of national stars adds sheen to Hazare Trophy knockout rounds

Gill, Prasidh, Padikkal set to turn out for their respective State teams; all eyes on Hardik, Shami and Arshdeep as Champions Trophy selection looms

CRICKET

S. Dipak Ragav
VADODARA

One of the issues that has cropped up in Indian cricket in recent times has been the lack of participation from the leading names in domestic cricket.

But come Thursday, when the knockout stage of the Vijay Hazare Trophy begins here, some of the top Indian stars will show up for their respective teams.

It is understood that the selectors have asked that the national team players who were in Australia must play in the 50-over competition if their teams have qualified.

Abhimanyu in the fray

Abhimanyu Easwaran has joined the Bengal camp ahead of his side's pre-quarterfinal match against defending champion Haryana on Thursday. In the other pre-quarterfinal of the day, Tamil Nadu will face Rajasthan.

Prasidh Krishna, Devdutt Padikkal (both Karnataka), and Shubman Gill (Punjab) are also expected to play in their team's respective quarterfinal matches on Saturday.

Globally, sandwiched between T20 and Test cricket, the one-day format is fighting for relevance. Considering the one-dayers (VHT) is also being held after the IPL auction, the event doesn't have a lot of stake for the players.

It is understood that the selectors have asked the national team players, who were in Australia, to play in the 50-over competition if their teams have qualified

Left-arm pacer Arshdeep, a regular in T20Is, played in five of the six ODIs India has played since the '23 World Cup and will aim to become a regular in this format.

The Punjab bowler currently leads the wicket tally with 17 scalps to his name

However, with the focus on the upcoming ICC Champions Trophy next month and the presence of stars, the domestic tournament should get some much-needed limelight.

Focus on Shami

Though India's one-day set-up is largely set, the selectors have a final chance to see the likes of all-rounder Hardik Pandya (Baroda), Mohammed Shami (Bengal) and Arshdeep Singh (Punjab).

Shami, who impressed at the 2023 ODI World Cup at home, is on a recovery path following his heel surgery. After playing all the games in the Syed Mushtaq Ali T20 tournament, the Bengal pacer has featured in only two outings in this competition, bowling eight overs in each.

Left-arm pacer Arshdeep, a regular in T20Is, played in five of the six ODIs India has played since the '23 World Cup and will aim to become a regular in this format. He currently leads the charts after the group stages with 17 scalps.

Similarly, Hardik, who opted out of the ODI series in Sri Lanka last year, opened the bowling for his side in the three games he played in the league stages as he looks to reclaim his place in the one-day set-up.

Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Vidarbha, and Baroda sealed their berths in the quarterfinals, having topped their respective groups.

Punjab, by being the best second-placed team across five groups, also got a direct berth in the last eight.

The fixtures:
Pre-quarterfinals: Jan. 9: Haryana vs Bengal (PQF1); Rajasthan vs Tamil Nadu (PQF2).
Quarterfinals: Jan. 11: Maharashtra vs Punjab (QF3); Karnataka vs Baroda (QF4); **Jan. 12:** Gujarat vs winner of PQF1 (QF1); Vidarbha vs winner of PQF2 (QF2); **Semifinals: Jan. 15:** Winner of QF1 vs QF4; **Jan. 16:** Winner of QF2 vs QF3.
Final: Jan. 18.

Home comfort: Padikkal, who was part of the Indian team in Australia, will be a key batter for Karnataka. FILE PHOTO: VIJAY SONEJI

Theekshana's hat-trick in vain as NZ seals ODI series

LANKA IN NZ

Associated Press
HAMILTON

Rachin Ravindra and Mark Chapman made half centuries in a 112-run second-wicket partnership which helped New Zealand to a 113-run win over Sri Lanka in the rain-hit second ODI on Wednesday and an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-match series.

Rachin made 79 from 63 balls and Chapman scored 62 from 52 as New Zealand reached 255 for nine batting first in a match reduced by rain to 37 overs per side.

Maheesh Theekshana became the seventh Sri Lanka player to take an ODI hat trick when he dismissed Mitchell Santner, Nathan Smith and Matt Henry with consecutive deliveries across two overs late in the innings.

Valiant effort: Theekshana was in his element but couldn't stop New Zealand from winning. AFP

Sri Lanka slumped to 22 for 4 but Kamindu Mendis made a career-best 64 before the team was dismissed for 142 in 30.2 overs.

Mendis put on 57 for the fifth wicket with Janith Liyanage (22) and 47 for the sixth wicket with Chamidu Wickramasinghe (17) in a key stand which was cut short by the second run-out of Sri Lanka innings.

The scores: New Zealand 255/9 in 37 overs (Rachin 79, Chapman 62, Theekshana 4/44) bt Sri Lanka 142 in 30.2 overs (Kamindu 64).

Sahaj stars in Railways' win over Punjab

BASKETBALL

Sports Bureau

Sahaj Pratap Sekhon (22) sank a three-pointer with three seconds left for the hooter to help Railways to a thrilling 73-72 victory over Punjab in a men's group-B league match of the 74th National basketball championship at the Sidsar Sports Complex in Bhavnagar on Wednesday.

With another day of league matches to go, Railways, Tamil Nadu, Services, Punjab and Karnataka secured their entry into the quarterfinals in the men's section.

In the women's section, Punjab, Delhi, Kerala, Railways and Tamil Nadu confirmed their entry into the next stage.

The results (league): Men:
Group-A: Kerala 63 (Sejin Mathew 18, Joshua Oommen 17, Grigo Varghese 14) bt Services 52 (Sahil 19, Gaurav Chandal 13).
Tamil Nadu 83 (Prashanth Rawat 21, Aravind Kumar 16, Baldhaneswar 13, Muin Bek 12) bt Rajasthan 60 (Sharad Dhadhich 18).
Group-B: Railways 73 (Sahaj Pratap Singh Sekhon 22, Palpreet Singh 18) bt Punjab 72 (Kanwar Gurbaz Singh Sandhu 20, Nawaz Singh Panaich 16, Gurwinder Singh 13, Amjot Gill 10).
Women: Group-A: Railways 83 (Vaishnavi Yadav 13, Sathiya Senthilkumar 12, Dharshini 11, K. Sathya 10) bt Karnataka 33 (C.N. Supritha 12, Ruth Blessen 11).
Delhi 70 (Preeti Kumar 20, Prakriti Ranjan 19, Namrata 15) bt Punjab 57 (Kanishka Dhir 18, Manmeet Kaur 13, Komalpreet Kaur 10).
Group-B: Tamil Nadu 72 (Krithika Sureshbabu 14, Anumaria 13, Nika Amuthan 12) bt Chhattisgarh 63 (Divyani Gangwal 17, Divya Sam 12, Shanti Xaxa 12, Nisha Kashyap 11, Neha Karwa 11).
Kerala 71 (sreekala Rani 25, V.J. Jayalakshmi 16, Susan Florentina 15) bt Tamil Nadu 52 (Krithika Sureshbabu 14, J Ishwarya 11).

Four Indian riders to train in Spain for 2025 season

Sports Bureau
CHENNAI

Promising Indian riders Geoffrey Emmanuel, Kavin Quintal, Johann Emmanuel and Nadine Balaji have joined Gaman Racing and will be honing their skills in Spain for the competitive 2025 season as the Spanish outfit inked an agreement with Gusto Racing India.

Under the leadership of former racer Emmanuel Jebaraj, the Chennai-based team Gusto Racing India has partnered Gaman Racing Global Service to develop and nurture young Indian riders.

"Our vision is to create a strong pipeline of future champions," said Jebaraj. "This partnership with Gaman Racing is our vision to train and create Indian riders of international standard," he added.

For the 2025 season, Geoffrey, Kavin, and Johann will train at MotorLand Aragón, Gaman Racing's state-of-the-art facility in Spain. They will undergo rigorous physical preparation and skill development.

Bhambri and Olivetti make quarterfinals in Auckland

Sports Bureau

Yuki Bhambri and Albano Olivetti of France beat Sander Arends and Luke Johnson 6-4, 6-4 in the pre-quarterfinals of the $766,290 ATP tennis tournament in Auckland, New Zealand, on Wednesday.

Other results:
$766,290 ATP, Adelaide, Australia: Doubles (pre-quarterfinals): Harri Heliovaara (Fin) & Henry Patten (GBR) bt Sriram Balaji & Miguel Reyes-Varela (Mex) 3-6, 6-3, [13-11].

$100,000 Challenger, Nonthaburi, Thailand: Doubles (pre-quarterfinals): Francis Alcnatara (Phi) & Evan King (USA) bt Niki Poonacha & Saketh Myneni 6-4, 4-6, [10-8]; Blake Bayldon (Aus) & Jakub Paul (Sui) bt Anirudh Chandrasekar & Karol Drzewiecki (Pol) 7-6(4), 6-3.
$60,000 ITF women, Nonthaburi, Thailand: Doubles (pre-quarterfinals): Alicia Barnett (GBR) & Prarthana Thombare bt Ines Ibbou (Alg) & Naima Karamoko (Sui) 6-3, 6-3; Rutuja Bhosale & Eudice Chong (Hkg) bt Maria Mateas & Alana Smith (USA) 6-4, 1-6, [10-1].

KARNATAKA ROUND-UP

Karnataka women defeat Assam to post their first win

Karnataka recorded its first win in the BCCI U-19 Women's One Day Trophy in Surat with a 68-run victory over Assam on Wednesday. B.G. Tejashwini (63), H. Bhavika Reddy (50) and V. Veda Varshini (3/18) impressed.

The scores:
Karnataka 208 in 50 overs (Sloka Veerahyndhavi 29, H. Bhavika Reddy 50, B.G. Tejashwini 63, Karnika Karthick 25, Khush Kumari 3/51) bt Assam 140/9 in 50 overs (Kaku Barman 36 n.o., V. Veda Varshini 3/18).

Chandasi's half-century to no avail

Chandasi Krishnamurthy's half-century (52 n.o.) went in vain as Uttar Pradesh put it across Karnataka by eight wickets in the BCCI under-23 Women's T20 Trophy in Cuttack on Wednesday.

The scores:
Karnataka 118/5 in 20 overs (Krishika Reddy 39 n.o., Chandasi Krishnamurthy 52 n.o.) lost to Uttar Pradesh 122/2 in 18.1 overs (Sampada Dixit 30, Varnika 28 n.o., Nishi Kashyap 26 n.o.).

Champion outfit: The Bengaluru City University team that triumphed in the South Zone inter-University men's hockey tournament in Chennai on Tuesday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Aaryansinh excels as Bangalore takes first innings lead

Aaryansinh Chavda's all-round effort (5/35 & 72) helped Bangalore secure the first-innings lead over Bangalore City XI in a drawn KSCA-Bangalore inter-district U-14 tournament encounter.

The scores:
President's XI 452/8 in 90 overs (Nitish Arya 235, Hruthik Kumar 74, C. Cheran Tej Raju 51 n.o., Skanda Subbaiah 3/80) drew with Secretary's XI 365/5 in 90 overs (D.C. Surya 25, Niranjan Ashok 127, B. Amol Pai 35, Arnav Ravindra Dere 37, Skanda Subbaiah 47 n.o., Aaryan Nagesh 52 n.o.).
Combined City XI 317 in 80.4 overs (V. Niraj 30, R. Rohith Reddy 178, Panshul Sharma 38, Purab Soni 6/42) drew with Vice President's XI 231 in 88 overs (Shamanth K.C. Raju 28, Hannan Zaki Ahmad 28, Athreya Bhat 26, Purab Soni 54, M. Tanshh Krishna 3/38).
Bangalore City XI 199 in 72.5 overs (Samarth Suresh 55, Vyom Naidu 37, Paarth Madan 52, Aaryansinh Chavda 5/35) & 64/3 in 21 overs (Mansoor Javed Eroor 37 n.o.) drew with Bangalore 259/9 in 90 overs (Aarav Bajaj 30, Aaryansinh Chavda 72, Vikram 60 n.o., Shivohum Gupta 3/58).

Aditya shines in Kodagu FC's narrow victory

Aditya Pratap Singh Rathore scored a brace as Kodagu FC edged out Sporting Club Bengaluru 3-2 in the BDFA Urbanrise Super Division League football on Wednesday.

The results: FC Bengaluru United 4 (Jerry Onesemas Pulate 1, 55, Akshunna Tyagi 65, Ngairangbam Rakesh Singh 69) bt FC Real Bengaluru 1 (A. Vaishak 19).
HAL FC 1 (Waris Ahmad Bhat 90+6) bt Rebels FC 0; Kodagu FC 3 (Tagrtu James 36, Aditya Pratap Singh Rathore 61, 64) bt Sporting Club Bengaluru 2 (Tharun Kumar 75, 87).

Ashco HC routs Coorg HA

Ashco HC beat Coorg HA by a comprehensive 8-1 margin in the KSHA B-division hockey league on Wednesday.

BFI adopts World Boxing's new weight classes

Press Trust of India
BAREILLY

Boxing Federation of India will conduct the men's National championships here in 10 weight categories, in line with the classification introduced by the breakaway World Boxing.

The new weight classes are 50kg (flyweight), 55kg (bantam), 60kg (light), 65kg (welter), 70kg (light-middle), 75kg (middle), 80kg (light- heavy), 85kg (cruiser), 90kg (heavy) and +90kg (super-heavy). For women they are 48kg (light-fly), 51kg (fly), 54kg (bantam), 57kg (feather), 60kg (light), 65kg (welter), 70kg (light-middle), 75kg (middle), 80kg (light-heavy), +81kg (heavy).